E/1997/33

United Nations

Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund

Report of the Executive Board on its work during 1997

Economic and Social Council

Official Records, 1997
Supplement No. 13

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NOTE

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures.

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Part one

FIRST REGULAR SESSION

Held at United Nations Headquarters from 13 to 17 January 1997

I. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Introduction

1. The Vice President of the Executive Board for 1996, Ms. Cecilia Rebong (Philippines), on behalf of the President, H. E. Mrs. Annette des Iles (Trinidad and Tobago), opened the first regular session 1997. She extended, on behalf of all Bureau members, special thanks to the many delegations and staff members of the secretariat for having made possible the successes and achievements of the Board in 1996. She then elaborated on a number of decisions taken by the Board during 1996. In addition, she noted that the number of informal Board meetings that took place in 1996 attested to the efforts by the Board and Secretariat to enhance awareness of critical development issues among policy makers and the public.

2. The Bureau had met on 7 November, 17 December, and 13 January. At those meetings, it reviewed the working methods of the Executive Board, discussed the preparation of the work plan for 1997, considered the presentation aspects and approval processes of the UNDP country cooperation frameworks and UNFPA country programmes, and agreed on the countries and dates of the first field visit to be undertaken in 1997.

3. In closing, the Vice-President thanked the members of the Bureau and, on their behalf, expressed their gratitude for the support and trust received from the Executive Board in 1996.

Election of the Bureau

4. The Executive Board elected the following Bureau for 1997:

President: Mr. Hans Lundborg (Sweden)

Vice-President: Mr. Bruce Lutangu Namakando (Zambia)

Vice-President: Mr. Mochamed Slamet Hidayat (Indonesia)

Vice-President: Mr. Sorin Mihail Tanasescu (Romania)

Vice-President: H. E. Mr. John William Ashe (Antigua and Barbuda)

5. The President, Mr. Hans Lundborg (Sweden), thanked the outgoing President and Vice-Presidents for 1996. He looked forward to working with all Executive Board members and the secretariat in ensuring that the work of the Board was as fruitful and efficient as possible. He hoped to continue the well-established tradition of efficiency in the Board, beginning its meetings on time, ensuring focused discussion and concise statements, and reaching for consensus in an open and transparent manner. He underlined the need to follow up in 1997 on the decisions adopted by the Board in the previous years. It was necessary to remain actively involved in and contribute to the process of reform. He also cited the importance of the change management process. The follow-up to General Assembly resolution 50/227 was highlighted, particularly with reference to the funding arrangements for UNDP and UNFPA. He hoped that improved documentation

would lead to improved discussions. He would do his utmost to help to facilitate the work of the Board, in close collaboration with other members of the Bureau, the cooperation of all members and observers, and the support of the secretariat. He conveyed the Board's sincere congratulations to the Vice-Presidents on their election. He looked forward to working together on a team that would reflect the views and positions of different countries.

6. The Associate Administrator thanked the outgoing Bureau and congratulated the newly elected Bureau on behalf of the staff of UNDP, UNFPA, and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS).

Agenda

7. The Secretary informed the Executive Board that all documents, except for DP/1997/2 on the harmonization of presentation of budgets and accounts, had been submitted to the United Nations Office of Conference and Support Services (UNOCSS) on schedule. She noted that an informal note on the response to the external evaluation of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) had been distributed as requested at the pre-session informal meeting.

8. The Executive Board approved the following agenda for its first regular session, as contained in document DP/1997/L.1:

Item 1. Organizational matters

UNFPA segment

Item 2. UNFPA: Country programmes and related matters

Item 3. UNFPA: Financial, budgetary and administrative matters

Item 4. UNFPA: Coordination in health policy and programming

UNDP/UNFPA joint segment

Item 5. Harmonization of presentation of budgets

UNDP segment

Item 6. Country cooperation frameworks and related matters

Item 7. Financial, budgetary and administrative matters

Item 8. United Nations Development Fund for Women

Item 9. Other matters

9. The Executive Board approved the work plan, contained in document DP/1996/L.1, as orally amended.

10. The Executive Board approved the report of the third regular session 1996 (DP/1996/39).

Matters relating to the rules of procedure, documentation and the functioning of the Executive Board

Rules of procedure

11. The Chairperson of the ad hoc open-ended working group on the rules of procedure, Ms. Cecilia Rebong (Philippines), presented document DP/1997/CRP.1, which contained a progress report by the President of the Executive Board for 1996 on the work of the ad hoc open-ended working group on rules of procedure established by decision 96/25. She noted that the working group intended to finish its work in time for the draft rules of procedure to be presented at the annual session 1997 for adoption.

12. One delegation stated that it wished to express its views in writing on the second draft text of the rules of procedure as it had not been able to attend the meeting of the working group in December. The President agreed to that request.

13. The Executive Board was informed that the Bureau had requested Ms. Rebong to continue as chairperson of the ad hoc open-ended working group on rules of procedure.

14. The Executive Board took note of the progress report by the President on the work of the ad hoc open-ended working group on rules of procedure.

Documentation

15. With regard to implementation of Executive Board decision 96/45 on documentation, the Secretary informed the Executive Board that the provisions of the decision had been complied with almost completely. Only one document for the present session had not been submitted 10 weeks in advance of the session. However, delays had been experienced in issuance of documents in official languages owing to the heavy UNOCSS workload during the General Assembly period. Advance copies of documentation and conference room papers would now be posted on the UNDP home page, accessible to all Permanent Missions to the United Nations. She noted that UNDP and the United Nations utilized different software programmes. Discussions with UNOCSS were ongoing. Documentation for future sessions would be posted on the Internet. Requests for conference room papers might have to be more limited as the increasing use of those papers in lieu of official documents was of growing concern. The Secretary informed the Board that an informal consultation would be held on the annual report of the Administrator.

16. The Chief of the Central Planning and Coordination Service, Office of the Director of Conference Services, made a statement to the Executive Board on the electronic dissemination of documents. The basic strategy of the United Nations Secretariat was to utilize the Internet in order to provide access to the optical disk system of the United Nations. The optical disk system was a repository of the final, official versions of all parliamentary documents issued

by the United Nations in New York and in Geneva, including the documents of the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board. All such documents were available on the optical disk in all languages simultaneously, as soon as they were released in hard copy.

17. Accessibility of documents through the United Nations website was accepted as the preferred means of dissemination by the General Assembly in resolution 51/211 C. By the end of December 1996, over 125 missions in New York had e-mail and Internet services provided through UNDP. In addition, 115 passwords had been issued to users of the optical disk from 57 missions in New York, and 54 passwords had been issued to users accessing the optical disk from government offices located in 18 different countries. Training on information retrieval and downloading from the system was provided by the United Nations at the Dag Hammarskjöld Library.

18. Several delegations expressed appreciation for the oral reports, underlining that real progress had been made in the dissemination of documentation during 1996. The secretariat was complying with Executive Board decision 95/45. One delegation noted that the Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund had declared a 15-page limit on the annual report of the Executive Director, a restriction it was hoped UNDP and UNFPA would also follow. Another delegation requested that conference room papers, which were not available on the optical disk system, be made available electronically through the UNDP website. One speaker stated that a very small percentage of the official documentation had been made available to his capital in its official language. He requested information on the possibility of distribution through the Internet to his country's capital and noted that UNICEF sent documentation by express mail in the requested official language to his country's capital 15 days in advance of its Executive Board session. Another speaker was concerned that the optical disk system could be too costly for all missions to the United Nations and capitals to obtain.

19. The Chief of the Central Planning and Coordination Service explained that there were different levels of access through Internet. Documents were filed electronically on the optical disk system at the same time they were distributed in hard copy. As of November 1996, the hard copy could be retrieved electronically since the optical disk system and Internet had been linked. He noted that a facility for electronic distribution of documents was available in the capital of the country whose representative had stated he had not received all of the documentation in time for the session.

Work plan of the Executive Board for 1997

20. The Secretary of the Executive Board introduced the draft work plan of the Executive Board for 1997 (DP/1997/CRP.2), explaining that comments made at the third regular session 1996 on the outline of UNDP and UNFPA issues for 1997 had been taken into account in the proposed work plan. Changes resulting from the pre-session informal meeting held on 17 December 1996 were read orally as follows: (a) in table 2, the item on rules of procedure should be removed and placed in table 3, for consideration at the annual session 1997; (b) in table 3, the report of the Executive Director would also include a section on resources; (c) on page 8, the word "New" should be replaced with "Special" with reference

to the Special Initiative on Africa; (d) the main programme records of the annual report of the Administrator would include reports on funds under UNDP administration. The Secretary noted that each year at the Board's second regular session, one fund would be selected for in-depth examination, on a rotating basis. Reporting on that fund would not be repeated in the annual report of the Administrator. In 1997, the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) would be considered at the second regular session.

21. The Secretary noted the proposal that country cooperation frameworks (CCFs) of UNDP be taken up at the annual session 1997, on an exceptional basis. She also informed the Executive Board that the third regular session would be reduced to five days (table 4). That reduction would result in the allocation of one and a half days devoted to UNFPA financial and budgetary matters and one half day for consideration of UNDP CCFs. The item on field visits could be taken up in an informal meeting. The item on the round-table process could be postponed to 1998.

22. Several delegations commented on the draft work plan for 1997. One delegation requested more specificity in the themes for the annual and regular sessions and also suggested that UNDP and UNFPA items be clustered whenever possible, including through joint discussions of CCFs and country programmes. A list of CCFs and country programmes to be considered in 1997 was requested. It was suggested that the work plan be flexible in order to accommodate new developments.

23. Another delegation underlined the importance of including strategy and policy planning at each session, and suggested that the following areas could be highlighted at different sessions: country programming, evaluation of impact and effectiveness of UNDP programmes, public information, and resource mobilization. The synergy between the latter two areas was emphasized in view of its importance to the work of UNDP and with regard to its relationship to the public and to legislators. That delegation also suggested that the Executive Board have five standing committees to draft strategic papers for consideration by the Board.

24. One delegation requested that the strategic and business plans of UNCDF and the United Nations Volunteer Programme be considered in 1997. The Secretary confirmed that the UNCDF plans would be taken up at the second regular session 1997.

25. The President noted that the issues paper on the work plan for 1997 presented at the third regular session 1996 should be considered in relation to the draft work plan, as it contained the rationale and background for the items to be considered by the Executive Board in 1997.

26. One delegation, supported by another, proposed that the second regular session 1997 be reduced to three days and scheduled during the same week as the second regular session of the UNICEF Executive Board, which would be held for two days. Another delegation expressed the view that the Board needed the full week during the second regular session owing to its heavy workload.

27. One speaker sought clarification on documentation on accountability for the second regular session and suggested that in future years the joint UNDP/UNFPA item on reports to the Economic and Social Council be taken up at the second regular session. A separate report on the assistance to the Palestinian people was also requested. It was requested that official documentation on the round-table process be provided when that item was considered in 1998.

28. One delegation expressed concern that the conference room paper on national execution would not be comprehensive enough, with sufficient relevant examples from the field, and thus requested that discussion of that item be postponed if programme countries had not been consulted. Another speaker requested that UNDP comply with the recommendations regarding national execution contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors (A/51/488/Add.2) with regard to national execution. An update on the development of general standards for national execution was requested.

29. Several requests for additional items were made, including on the Reserve for Field Accommodation (RFA) and one on interregional cooperation, both at the annual session. One delegation requested that the Administrator give the Executive Board an update on relevant developments, including strategic evaluations, at each session under the item on organizational matters.

30. Two delegations requested official documentation for the items on national execution and the general budget strategy at the second regular session, rather than conference room papers. The Secretary noted that the deadline for the submission of documents for the second regular session had already passed.

31. One delegation, also on behalf of another, in noting the presentation of the comprehensive evaluation of UNFPA in 1998 and the summary of evaluation findings in 1997, requested that information be provided that related financial expenditures to outcomes and that the Executive Board be informed on how the results and lessons learned of those evaluations would be fed back into UNFPA programmes. The same delegation also queried whether the report on the future country programming process of UNFPA requested in Executive Board decision 96/13 was included in the work plan 1997. Another delegation queried whether UNFPA would present a strategy for its 1998-1999 budget at the second regular session.

32. The Secretary informed the Executive Board that there would be reports on accountability at the second regular session as well as within the annual report of the Administrator at the annual session. She stated that the conference room paper on national execution was based on the evaluation of that modality, which had been undertaken in consultation with programme countries. The annual report of the Administrator would include a section on interregional cooperation. She noted that the Administrator and Executive Director did indeed report at each session on developments since the previous session. The request for more substantive reporting was noted and would be reflected in the future.

33. The Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) informed the Executive Board that it would not be technically possible for UNFPA to present its budget strategy at the second regular session. The Fund planned to convene

an informal session with Executive Board members when the strategy was finalized.

34. The Chief, Executive Board Branch, UNFPA, noted that the discussion on the process of consideration of UNFPA country programmes, which had been noted in the issues paper (DP/1996/13) on the work plan 1997, would be taken up under the item "country programmes and related matters". With regard to the query on evaluations, he stated that UNFPA would provide feedback on lessons learned and on progress in relating expenditures to outcomes, as much as possible in the summary on evaluation in the 1997 annual report of the Executive Director and in more detail in 1998.

35. The Executive Board approved the work plan 1997 as orally amended and annexed to decision 97/6.

36. A revised work plan, contained in document DP/1997/L.5, was distributed to the Executive Board.

37. One delegation, also on behalf of another, stated that it would support a shortened second regular session in 1998 and future years. Another delegation commented that it would propose that the work plan for 1998 concentrate on strategic issues and avoid micro-management. The same delegation also asked that notice be given one month ahead of each session regarding the CCFs for which a written request had been received that they be discussed.

Future sessions

38. The Executive Board agreed to the following schedule of future sessions of the Executive Board in 1997 subject to the approval of the Committee on Conferences:

Second regular session 1997: 10-14 March 1997

Annual session 1997: 12-23 May 1997 (New York)

Third regular session 1997: 15-19 September 1997

39. The Executive Board agreed to the following tentative schedule of future sessions of the Executive Board in 1998:

First regular session 1998: 19-23 January 1998

Second regular session 1998: 20-24 April 1998

Annual session 1998 (Geneva): 25 May-5 June 1998

Third regular session 1998: 7-11 September 1998

40. The Executive Board agreed to the subjects to be discussed at the second regular session 1997 as listed in table 2 of the annex to decision 97/6.

41. The Executive Board approved decision 97/6, an overview of decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its first regular session 1997.

42. The Administrator extended his gratitude to the Executive Board for a productive session, which had been characterized by difficult discussions on some issues. He noted that the period ahead would be demanding and looked forward to working with the Board in the year ahead.

43. The Deputy Director, Policy and Administration, UNFPA, on behalf of the Executive Director, thanked the Bureau for its leadership and the Executive Board for its guidance and advice during the session.

44. The President thanked all participants, the secretariats of UNDP and UNFPA, the interpreters, and the conference officers and assistants for a successful session. The Bureau would meet frequently and ensure follow-up to the decisions of the Executive Board.

UNFPA SEGMENT

45. The Executive Director brought the Executive Board up to date on some of the developments at UNFPA since the last Board meeting. She informed the Board that a record number of new country programmes would be proposed at the first and second regular sessions 1997. Half of the programmes would be for sub-Saharan Africa, which continued to be a priority region for the Fund, as it was for the entire United Nations system through the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa, in which UNFPA was an active participant. The Fund continued its efforts on initiatives of special significance to the continent, including combating female genital mutilation, which was the subject of an expert consultation that took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in March 1996.

46. The Executive Director enumerated some of the areas in which the Fund was actively cooperating with other United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as reproductive and sexual rights, reproductive health in emergency and conflict situations, youth concerns and the effective integration of gender dimensions in population programmes. In November 1996, for example, UNFPA signed an agreement with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to address the reproductive health needs of refugees in the Great Lakes region of central Africa. Recent activities designed for young people included the UNFPA-sponsored International Youth Essay Contest on promoting responsible reproductive health behaviour. A technical consultation focusing on adolescent reproductive health, including a discussion of female genital mutilation, was scheduled for January 1997.

47. Within the United Nations system, UNFPA continued to play a lead role in implementing the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). Internally, the Executive Director had initiated a management review of the Fund's operations, with the assistance of the British Overseas Development Administration (ODA). The review was focusing on streamlining and revising internal policies and procedures guidelines,

reorienting staff training, improving the management of field offices and strengthening oversight, monitoring and evaluation processes.

48. The Executive Director reported on the resource situation, noting that the total general income for 1996 would be approximately $309 million, about $3 million less than the previous year. The decline was largely the result of the reduction in the contribution of one major donor. However, other donors had increased their contributions, thereby making the decline less pronounced than it could have been. Multi-bilateral financial support had reached $16.7 million, the highest level ever. The Executive Director also followed up on the note verbale that she had sent to members of the Executive Board, announcing that the Fund had reached an agreement valued at $35 million with the European Union to provide multi-bilateral assistance for several countries in Asia. She also reported that she had authorized a drawdown in the Fund's operational reserve at the end of 1996 because of the late receipt of monetary commitments from a few of the major donors and the need to meet financial commitments already made for programme activities. That situation emphasized the need for regular payment schedules of donor contributions.

49. Delegations welcomed the Executive Director's statement. Several particularly welcomed the emphasis she had given to the Fund's activities in Africa and on working with NGOs. One delegation noted favourably that the gender dimension was receiving such attention at the Fund and wondered whether the Executive Director would be prepared to offer "best practices" in that area. The same delegation also asked about the current level of the operational reserve. Another delegation welcomed the Fund's participation at the International Youth Forum in Vienna. The same delegation also requested that data concerning such gender issues as women's access to resources be included more frequently in UNFPA publications. One delegation requested that more information on the management review process and on the strengthening of country offices be provided to the Executive Board either at an informal session or during the annual session. One delegation regretted the decline in the volume of contributions to core resources and called on countries to try to increase the level of their contributions, in line with the commitments made at the ICPD. In that regard, another delegation wondered whether the number of country programmes was not stretching the resources of the Fund too thinly.

50. The Executive Director responded that it was too early to come forward with "best practices" concerning gender, but she could enumerate some of the things being done: seeing that data were disaggregated by gender throughout the United Nations system, involving both women and men in programme design and management, retraining all UNFPA staff on gender issues, and making sure that gender advisers on the Fund's country support teams worked with UNIFEM so that there could be cross-fertilization between agencies. She noted that the Inter-Agency Task Force on Basic Social Services for All, which she chaired, would be coming up with "best practices" in all the areas in which it was working, including gender.

51. The Executive Director said that NGOs had not been involved in the implementation of UNFPA programmes as much as was optimal but that progress was being made. Often that meant working with Governments to help them appreciate the value that NGOs could have, especially in reaching certain segments of a

society, such as women and young people. It was also necessary to carry out training at the NGOs themselves in order to increase their capacities for implementation and management of activities. And, it meant building upon the Fund's already improving accreditation process so that it had greater ability to choose appropriate NGOs with which to work. In that regard, the Board should note that the new multi-bilateral cooperation in Asia agreed to with the European Union was earmarked for work with NGOs.

52. The Executive Director was pleased that the Executive Board was so positive about the continuing efforts of the Fund to give more emphasis to Africa. She noted that the amount of resources being devoted to programmes in Africa had increased greatly: from expenditures of $36 million in 1993 to allocations of $103 million in 1996. She also noted that one of the chief objects of the internal management review process was to push for greater decentralization of operations to the field, not just in terms of financial responsibility but management and policy responsibility as well. She said that she would be pleased to discuss the management review process in greater depth at a later time in another forum. In answer to the question about stretching the Fund's resources, she noted that it was the Fund's programme formulation process, which mobilized a lot of human resources both in the field and at headquarters, that was being stretched, not the financial resources for programme implementation. The Fund was already implementing programmes in some 120 countries around the world, and all of those programmes had already had resources allocated to them depending on the overall volume of resources available to the Fund. She informed delegations that the Fund was receiving that week the remainder of the delayed contributions, which meant that the operational reserve would be restored to its authorized amount of $63 million.

II. UNFPA: COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS

53. The President suggested to delegations that, as proposed at the Executive Board's pre-session informal meeting, the Board take advantage of the presence of three UNFPA representatives to engage in an informal discussion on the Fund's programmes in those three countries. There being no objection, the Board adjourned into an informal session to hear from and ask questions of the UNFPA representatives for Côte d'Ivoire, Malawi and Mexico.

Overview

54. Upon resumption of the session, the Deputy Executive Director (Programme) introduced the UNFPA country programmes that were being proposed to the Executive Board. She outlined the programming process at UNFPA and reported that a total of 34 country programmes were being presented to the Board at its first and second regular sessions 1997. The unusually large number had put a strain on the Fund's human resources, but she felt sure that the results justified the expenditure of effort. She reported that with the assistance of the British ODA, UNFPA was to begin staff training on logical framework techniques and those techniques should be reflected in future country programmes beginning with the third regular session 1997. She informed the Board that the country programmes for Algeria, Brazil, Egypt and Yemen were being extended for one year and that of Bhutan for six months, to the end of 1997, in order to

complete programme activities but that no additional financial resources were required. She asked for the Board's guidance on how the Fund could best meet the requirements of decision 96/13, which called on UNFPA to align its country programme approval process with those of UNDP and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), in time for a decision at the annual session 1997.

55. In introducing the 10 country programmes being presented to the first regular session 1997, the Deputy Executive Director (Programme) referred to some of the main themes that animated the proposals being made for the various geographical regions. The largest number of programmes being proposed were for the sub-Saharan Africa region, which also contained the largest number of priority countries for UNFPA programmes overall. The quality and coverage of reproductive health services were inadequate throughout Africa, and that led to a number of problems, including high rates of maternal mortality and morbidity. In addition, harmful traditional practices, such as female genital mutilation, were widespread on the continent. The aim of all the UNFPA programmes being proposed (for Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Malawi, United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia) was to build up the weak institutional structures of the countries involved so that they could manage and implement their own reproductive health and population programmes.

56. In the Asia and Pacific region, two South Asian countries were being discussed - an extension of the country programme for Bangladesh and a new programme for Nepal. In those countries, the aims were to reorient population programmes to the goals of the ICPD, shifting away from target-based approaches, and to set standards for quality of care. Somewhat different was the proposed programme for Mongolia, which like many Asian countries with economies in transition needed assistance in reducing the high incidence of abortion and improving overall access to reproductive health care. An extension of the regional programme for the South Pacific was also being proposed.

57. Two countries in the Arab States region, Djibouti and Morocco, were being proposed for new country programmes. In both countries, as with other countries in the region, a major concern was the low levels of female literacy and schooling and other barriers to the empowerment of women. Morocco presented the situation of a country that had had a large number of achievements in the areas of population and reproductive health but in which some areas of the country and some segments of the population had made less progress; the proposed programme would focus on the populations and regions that had been neglected.

58. In Latin America and the Caribbean, similar problems existed. Many countries had made great strides in terms of economic improvement and in achieving their population goals, but certain segments of society, such as the poor, the indigenous populations and rural women, still lagged behind. UNFPA programmes would, therefore, concentrate their efforts in reaching out to these groups. That was the case of the proposed new programme for Mexico and the extension of the Nicaragua country programme. In all programmes in the region, a major focus would continue to be on adolescents, who were often neglected by reproductive health programmes and who suffered disproportionately from reproductive health problems. In summing up, the Deputy Executive Director (Programme) explained that by focusing on certain key issues in each region she did not mean to imply that other regions did not have similar problems.

Discussion

59. In addressing the overall programming process and the presentation of UNFPA country programmes in general, several delegations remarked that they were pleased with the new format for presenting country programmes and found recent programmes to be much improved in terms of analysis and in clearly presenting objectives and strategy, although some were better than others in that regard. However, they found that there was still room for improvement, especially in terms of lessons learned and implementation plans and the outcomes (quantifiable if possible) that were expected. One delegation stated that it approved of the way the programmes had been presented in one introductory statement and that it helped to consider the programmes in regional "clusters".

60. In general comments on the programmes themselves, one delegation questioned how realistic the prospects for some of the proposed amounts of multi-bilateral assistance were and pointed out that in many cases in the past the amounts approved had not been obtained. Delegations also noted that there continued to be a large number of proposals for extensions of programmes, some of which had had overexpenditures during the programme period. One delegation pointed out that the terms under which UNFPA would collaborate with NGOs in various countries were often quite vague. Another delegation asked that the proposed country programmes better reflect any proposed collaboration with the United Nations Joint and Co-sponsored Programme on AIDS (UNAIDS) and wondered why recently developed maternal mortality rates were not included in the programme proposals. Another delegation asked for more information concerning contraceptive procurement and logistics under proposed programmes, especially because that often constituted one of the Fund's comparative advantages in many countries. One delegation noted that the programmes did not indicate contributions that would be coming from the programme countries themselves; even if small, such contributions reinforced a sense of national ownership. It was suggested that it would be helpful to have a breakdown of the financial resources that would be devoted in proposed programmes to reproductive health services and those for information, education and communication (IEC) activities.

61. Several delegations addressed the question of the country programme approval process, with many saying that although there was value in aligning the UNFPA process with those of UNDP and UNICEF, the major priority of any adjustment should be the needs of the Fund and of the Board, not harmonization of procedures for the sake of harmonization. Some delegations commented that they felt that the UNICEF process responded more closely to what they would hope to see in place for UNFPA. One delegation stated that since the United Nations development agencies were working to harmonize their programme cycles, greater efforts should be made to harmonize the timing of their programme proposals as well. Some delegations would like to see members of the Executive Board involved earlier and more closely in the programme design process, with one delegation asking that field offices of bilateral and multilateral development assistance agencies be involved in the programme review and strategy development (PRSD) exercises and another saying that members should be involved in programme formulation after the PRSD and before the programme was presented to the internal UNFPA programme review committee. However, another delegation stated the view that the programmes proposed to the Board were meant to assist national

programmes and had to be developed with and approved by the respective Governments of the programme countries. Therefore, the early involvement of other Governments in the design process would be misplaced. In any case, the consensus of delegations was that there was no need to rush into a decision on the UNFPA country programming and approval process and that a decision at the annual session 1997 should be the goal.

Response by the administration

62. The Deputy Executive Director (Programme) thanked delegations for the positive comments they had made about the country programme presentations. She assured the Executive Board that UNFPA would continue to work to improve the programmes presented to the Board, including in terms of lessons learned and implementation plans, and reiterated that the logical framework training should be very helpful in that regard. In commenting on the recent large number of programme extensions, she noted that the situation had resulted from a wide variety of reasons, including delays in programme implementation in some cases, political disruptions in some of the countries and a desire to reduce the number of programmes to be processed by the UNFPA secretariat and discussed by the Executive Board in early 1997. In regard to multi-bilateral financing, she conceded that programmes in the past had perhaps been too optimistic but that the new programmes being presented were more conservative. However, they did include a certain flexibility to allow for possible multi-bilateral financing proposals in the future and for any increase in the Fund's core resources. In any case, greater efforts were being expended on realizing multi-bilateral funding.

63. The Deputy Executive Director (Programme) informed delegations that the Fund was rewriting its guidelines in order to be able to work more frequently with NGOs and that more specific plans should be evident in future programmes, as would any future collaboration with UNAIDS. She also stated that more detail could be given about proposed contraceptive management and procurement. She reminded delegations that many of the issues brought up were extensively discussed and addressed during the internal programming process and that it was often not possible to include all of those matters while complying with the Executive Board's wish that the country programme papers be as short as possible. That was why she was always pleased to have exchanges with the Board, so that she and her colleagues could answer specific questions that might not have been addressed in the country programme presentations.

64. In regard to the maternal mortality figures, she informed the Executive Board that the Fund was required to use the official United Nations estimates, which did not yet take the new figures into account, and that there had, in fact, been some questions about the methodology used to develop those figures. She advised delegations that she would look at the feasibility of providing a breakdown of the financial resources under reproductive health subprogrammes that would be going for the provision of services and those that would be used for IEC activities. She did say, however, that the one was often incorporated into the other and it was sometimes difficult to separate what was "services" as opposed to "IEC". She said that the Fund was trying to involve the local offices of other multilateral and bilateral donors more systematically in the

PRSD process while at the same time recognizing that the formulation of a proposed country programme was a matter between the Government and UNFPA.

Action by the Board

65. In summing up, the President said that it was clear that there was a consensus that a final decision on the UNFPA country programme approval process should wait until the annual session 1997. Given the large number of programmes being brought to the second regular session 1997, he proposed that the Executive Board adopt a process similar to that of UNDP, i.e., that they be considered on a "no-objection" basis. In the light of several clarifications, the Board agreed to that proposal with the understanding that it would be for that session only and would not pre-judge any decision that would be taken at the annual session. It was also specified that if five members asked for the detailed consideration of any one programme that would be done and that, in any case, at least three UNFPA Representatives would be invited to attend the session so that their programmes could be examined in more detail, much as had been done during the informal meeting of the current session. In response to a request for clarification, the President assured the Board that members retained the right to raise questions on any of the programmes presented to the second regular session 1997.

Africa

66. The President then asked delegations to consider the five country programmes from the Africa region that were being presented for their approval. He informed the Board that the Director of the Africa Division and the UNFPA Representatives for Côte d'Ivoire and Malawi were present to answer their questions.

Discussion

67. In regard to Côte d'Ivoire, the delegation from that country pointed out the country's great needs in terms of reducing infant and maternal mortality and in combating the spread of HIV/AIDS. In that connection, she wondered whether the Fund could help to take advantage of the large supply of natural rubber in the country to build a condom factory, which could also help to supply the needs of neighbouring countries. Another delegation questioned whether the programme had made any provisions for the reproductive health needs of the large number of refugees in the country. One delegation questioned whether adequate attention was being paid to the problem of female genital mutilation in the country. The same delegation also felt that for the African programmes as a whole not enough attention had been given to the possibilities for South-South cooperation.

68. In the discussion of the proposed Kenya country programme, delegations pointed out that the programme's plan to work to improve population and family planning statistics was much needed. There was a need to understand, and work within, the cultural attitudes and practices of the Kenyan people. Another delegation noted the great difference between urban and rural access to reproductive health services and felt that the proposed programme had not paid enough attention to that discrepancy. That delegation also felt that there was

room for improvement at the country level in coordination and cooperation between UNFPA and other development partners. Another delegation found the programme to be very ambitious and wondered how well thought through it had been; for example, it wondered whether the proposed programme did take into account the current health sector reform that was taking place in the country. That was reiterated by another delegation as well. One delegation noted with approval the focus on male involvement but felt that not enough attention had been given to a long-term strategy for sustaining the provision of contraceptives while another delegation wanted more information on the management of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). One delegation mentioned that it felt that overall donor coordination had declined in Kenya and asked for UNFPA's assistance in putting that back on track.

69. In regard to the Malawi programme, delegations pointed out that the amount of resources being provided seemed small in relation to the country's great needs. It was also cautioned that the objectives of the proposed programme seemed to be over-ambitious and that, given the prevalence of traditional attitudes, implementation of the proposed programme might be more difficult than foreseen. One delegation noted that AIDS was a great problem in the country and perhaps needed to be given more attention than had been proposed. It was pointed out that the infrastructure for carrying out reproductive health programmes was especially weak in Malawi and perhaps the programme should focus even more on strengthening the infrastructure as well as making greater efforts to sensitize the population about population issues in order to create a more conducive environment for carrying out the proposed programme. In that regard, another delegation asked whether the Fund felt that it had struck the right balance in the proposed reproductive health activities between the provision of services and IEC and asked that the programmes break down proposed expenditures into these two categories. The same delegation asked that greater attention be paid to developing and providing quality-of-care indicators.

70. On the proposed programme for the United Republic of Tanzania, one delegation mentioned that the objectives of the programme could have been clearer and thought that the presentation should have been more critical, including self-critical, since everyone knew that not everything was proceeding perfectly. Some delegations suggested that in the United Republic of Tanzania there was room for improvement in terms of coordination and cooperation among development partners in the country. Another delegation reported, however, that its own development agency had found cooperation with UNFPA in the United Republic of Tanzania to be excellent, collaborating effectively in such areas as pursuing an integrated reproductive health care approach, working with adolescents and women's organizations and in improving data collection. Given the small number of donors in the population field in the country, cooperation was essential in order to achieve maximum results. Another delegation noted that there was a large gap between the contraceptive prevalence rate in the country and the knowledge of modern contraception and wondered how the proposed programme planned to address that. Several delegations said that the programme should provide greater detail on expected "deliverables", including some actual targets for increasing the contraceptive prevalence rate.

71. One delegation also mentioned that the health infrastructure in the United Republic of Tanzania had deteriorated and wanted to know to what extent the

UNFPA programme would help in rebuilding it. Another delegation mentioned that there was indeed a need to improve quality of care in the country and suggested that greater involvement of NGOs could be a help in that regard. Another delegation regretted that the presentation did not discuss the role that the ongoing privatization of the health sector plan would play in the ability to implement the proposed programme. That was obviously going to have a great impact on the country, as would the country's ongoing structural adjustment programme. The same delegation asked if the programme included any activities designed to address the needs of the large number of refugees in the country.

72. In discussing the proposed programme for Zambia, delegations welcomed the shift in focus to an integrated reproductive health approach, feeling that perhaps there had been too strong an emphasis on family planning in the past. One delegation wondered whether the nature of UNFPA activities in the country had enabled the Government to develop a sense of national ownership of the programme. The health sector was being restructured into a horizontal programme model, but the UNFPA programme still seemed to have a vertical approach in that it had picked a few districts for reproductive health activities. Why was that so? There also seemed to be insufficient focus on HIV/AIDS, which was a particular problem in the country. Another donor expressed appreciation that his Government and UNFPA were working well in Zambia and proposed that the two could work even more closely in expanding the contraceptive method mix in the country. The same delegation also felt that the Fund could do more to expand work with NGOs. One delegation applauded the UNFPA programme saying that it was a country that needed assistance but could make great strides in achieving the ICPD goals and, in that regard, it was particularly important to pay attention to activities that helped to build national capacity.

Response of the administration

73. In her response, the Director of the Africa Division made a number of general points. She pointed out that many of the questions being asked, or areas where delegations felt that not enough detail was being provided, had, in fact, been covered in the longer country programme documents that had been prepared for the Fund's internal programme review committee. It was just not possible to include all the details in the shorter papers designed for the Executive Board, and that was why she was pleased to be able to respond in person to these questions or concerns.

74. The UNFPA Representative for Côte d'Ivoire responded that construction of a condom factory was beyond the resources available for the proposed programme. She said that there were programme components that included the Liberian refugees in the west of the country.

75. As regards Kenya, the Director of the Africa Division reported that UNFPA was trying to improve coordination and to focus more on rural areas. The Fund's understanding was that its cooperation with the Government in health sector reform had been very helpful. There had been great changes in Kenyan society, one result being a significant drop in fertility: that was certainly not all due to UNFPA assistance but she felt that the Fund had been a positive factor in achieving those results. She stated that UNFPA was one of the smallest donors in the population field in Kenya and, therefore, really had to concentrate on

its areas of greatest strength, which were seen to be, in that context, procurement of contraceptives and working with men and with adolescents, an area where there was great cultural resistance. That was one reason why the Fund was trying to get NGOs more involved.

76. The UNFPA Representative for Malawi concurred that the amount of funding going to the country was insufficient to meet the great needs that existed. That was a function of how much resources the Fund had to spend overall. The Fund was actively trying to mobilize multi-bilateral assistance as well, and some Governments had already indicated that they were prepared to contribute to the programme. As to whether the proposed programme struck the right balance between reproductive health services and IEC, the Representative pointed out that many of the IEC activities were actually incorporated into service provision activities. It was true that the national objectives were very ambitious, and that had been much discussed during the PRSD process. The Government wanted to keep the objectives ambitious, rather than conservative, as a way of focusing national attention on the urgency of the problems: the country had been isolated for so long that there was a great lack of awareness of population and reproductive health issues. That was why the programme proposed extensive work in the areas of IEC and advocacy, in order to change behaviours and opinions on reproductive health questions. On the question of indicators, one of the first things that would be done under the proposed programme was to develop a set of reproductive health indicators on such things as infant mortality rates, maternal mortality rates, contraceptive prevalence rates, prevalence of STDs and adolescent pregnancies, both as a way to know what the current situation was and to be able to tell what progress had been made at the end of the programme.

77. The Director of the Africa Division stated that in the United Republic of Tanzania, as in other African countries, there was considerable cultural resistance to some of the activities being carried out, and the Fund had to look at ways of overcoming that. Obviously, that was not something the Fund could do on its own but had to work with the Government and civil society in bringing about a positive change. The aim was to lessen some of the cultural constraints that had inhibited family planning and other reproductive health activities in the past. One success in that area had been the socially responsible soap opera that was mentioned in the country programme presentation. Her own experience, after a visit to the United Republic of Tanzania, was that male involvement in family planning, for example, was openly discussed in the country and that she had found a very encouraging environment. The neutrality of UNFPA as a member of the United Nations system was a major advantage in helping the country to develop population and development strategies. She agreed with delegations that the health infrastructure had to be made sustainable, so that it was not beyond the capacities of the Government to maintain. Cost-sharing was becoming more and more the norm in the United Republic of Tanzania because of the introduction of structural adjustment measures; that meant that many of the people who most needed reproductive health services could not afford them.

78. The Director of the Africa Division stated that she found the assertion that there was no sense of national ownership of the Zambia country programme to be very disturbing. The programme was developed following an extensive process of national consultation in which the Government had been very much involved.

In any case, the Fund was not there to impose any process on the Government, and she would ensure that that was not the case. As for the "verticality" of the programme, 60-70 per cent of the proposed resources were going into integrated reproductive health services, and the reason that the Fund was concentrating on certain districts was because those districts were not being covered by other donors.

Action by the Executive Board

79. The Executive Board approved the proposed programmes for Côte d'Ivoire (as contained in document DP/FPA/CP/169), Kenya (DP/FPA/CP/168), Malawi (DP/FPA/CP/162), United Republic of Tanzania (DP/FPA/CP/164), and Zambia (DP/FPA/CP/163). Speaking for other African delegations as well, the delegation of Zambia expressed its appreciation to the Board and to the Fund for the efforts that were being made in the continent.

Arab States

Discussion

80. One delegation addressed the proposed programme for Djibouti, stating that previous UNFPA assistance had been very helpful but that there was clearly much that remained to be done in terms of improving the country's reproductive health situation. There was a great lack of qualified staff in the country and a dearth of reliable demographic and reproductive health statistics, both of which problems the proposed programme addressed. The programme put into relief the problems of gender in the country and addressed the widespread practice of female genital mutilation. The delegation felt that the proposed programme was perhaps too ambitious given the country's weak institutional capacity and urged the Fund to cooperate closely with other development partners, including the Economic Commission for Africa, in trying to improve Djibouti's reproductive health situation.

81. The Director of the Division for Arab States and Europe concurred with the comments made about the Djibouti programme. She emphasized that the Fund's activities in the country were quite recent and more and more efforts were being made to coordinate all of the assistance in the areas of population and reproductive health. In that regard, she stated that UNFPA relied very heavily on the UNDP office in Djibouti since there was no UNFPA Representative resident in the country. As for issues concerning women, she stated that the Fund worked through local NGOs, which were the best placed to deal with gender issues, including female genital mutilation.

Action by the Executive Board

82. The Executive Board approved the proposed programmes for Djibouti (DP/FPA/CP/167) and Morocco (DP/FPA/CP/166). Following their adoption, the delegation of Morocco expressed the appreciation of its Government for the assistance being provided. The delegation noted some of the progress that had been made in the country and the country's great support for the goals of the ICPD. It noted, however, that progress had been unequal among different parts

of the country and different segments of society, and the proposed programme focused appropriately on the neglected elements.

Asia and the Pacific

Discussion

83. The proposed extension of the Bangladesh country programme for one year received the support of delegations although some of them questioned the principle of extensions. Delegations also wanted to know in what way the proposed extension reflected the results of the PRSD and the focus of the next country programme. One delegation questioned whether enough resources were being devoted to helping improve the status of women (including in supporting girls' education), which was a priority concern in the country while another delegation felt that more resources should be devoted to IEC. Several delegations brought up the issue of cooperation in Bangladesh between UNFPA and other bilateral and multilateral donors. Some delegations felt that UNFPA had not participated sufficiently in the World Bank-led donor consortium's health and population sector strategy mission and that there had been a lack of involvement of other development partners in the PRSD exercise. One delegation also mentioned that it felt that there could be better links between IEC activities being carried out by UNFPA and child survival interventions, such as immunization campaigns, being pursued by UNICEF. On the other hand, another delegation reported that it had found cooperation between its Government's development agency and UNFPA to be quite good.

84. In discussions on the proposed programme for Nepal, one delegation felt that insufficient attention had been paid in the presentation to the role of NGOs, several of which were active in the field of family planning in the country. Another delegation felt that the goals of the proposed programme were too ambitious and regretted the lack of discussion of the potential spread of HIV/AIDS. That delegation, along with another, pointed out the importance of efforts to improve the status of women: the country showed, for example, a marked cultural preference for sons. Another delegation reported that its Government's development agency was the only one currently supporting contraceptive supply and logistics in Nepal and requested greater assistance in that regard from UNFPA.

85. In connection with the proposed extension of the South Pacific programme, one delegation expressed concerns about the delays in implementing the previous programme that had resulted in a request for an extension. That delegation felt that management, scheduling and reporting on the programme needed to be improved if the next programme was to be a success. It particularly expressed concern at the perceived lack of coordination with other agencies active in the region, especially UNICEF and the South Pacific Commission. It looked forward to the PRSD exercise in 1997, when some of those issues could be addressed. Another delegation asked why there had been overexpenditures in the past.

Response by the administration

86. In his response, the Director of the Asia and Pacific Division reported that he and the Executive Director had recently spent several days in Bangladesh examining the programme there. As was well known, the country had made tremendous strides in its family planning programme, and there had been a great reduction in fertility levels in the past 20 years. That had been achieved through a vertical structure that included a Directorate General of Family Planning. The World Bank-led consortium was now proposing a reorganization of the vertical structure in the Ministry of Health. The Fund was waiting for the Government to make a decision on that issue. However, there was a feeling both at UNFPA and in parts of the Government that care should be taken so that restructuring would not have a negative effect on the country's family planning programme, and perhaps even jeopardize some of the gains made in that area. Any merger should proceed cautiously and reflect the reality of the situation on the ground, maybe by starting the merger at the service level, which was to some extent already being done, before proceeding to an administrative merger. The Fund felt that it was supporting the Government and its policies. If there was a perceived lack of cooperation with development partners, it was largely because the UNFPA country office was small and had not been able to participate in all the meetings called by other agencies. There may have been misunderstanding among the agencies, but he felt sure that the situation was being corrected. The Fund was, for example, coordinating its IEC activities with those of the German Agency for Technical Cooperation.

87. As to why the programme was being extended, the Director explained that it was largely the result of the nationwide strikes and political unrest, which had been widely reported, that made it impossible to field a PRSD mission to the country until the second half of 1996 and had caused problems in the implementation of the programme. The PRSD had now been completed and a new country programme would be prepared during the next six months. The political situation had led to delays in the approval of programme activities related to women's empowerment. Only in 1996 were those activities finally approved. That was reflected in the decrease in the funds needed in the area of gender, population and development. In working to improve the status of women, the Fund felt that the greatest gains could be made by working with NGOs, and the programme had just received the Government's concurrence in doing so. Therefore, greater advances could be expected in the future.

88. In addressing the concerns about working with NGOs in Nepal, the Director pointed out that the largest NGO in the country in the reproductive health area was the national affiliate of the International Planned Parenthood Federation, and that UNFPA worked closely with it. What seemed to be overlooked, however, was that the Government had entrusted a large part of its family planning IEC efforts to volunteer village health workers, who were comparable to an NGO, and the proposed programme had a large component built into it to cooperate with those volunteer workers. In spite of the fact that HIV/AIDS had not been mentioned in the country programme presentation, many activities designed to combat the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, were incorporated into the reproductive health component of the proposed programme, and the Fund was actively cooperating with UNAIDS in Nepal. As far as the provision of contraceptives was concerned, the Fund would support a study in

1997 to assess what Nepal's needs were. That would then be discussed with the Government and with other donors to determine the role that UNFPA could best play.

89. In discussing the South Pacific regional programme, the Director reported on the difficulties of managing a programme that was made up of 14 separate countries, each of which had different needs. The Fund was making every effort to focus attention on the priority countries in the region. Several countries had come up with a large number of activities that they wanted funded, especially following the ICPD, which had mobilized a great many of the countries to view their demographic and reproductive health situations in a new light. Rather than hold back that momentum, the Fund had gone ahead and approved some important post-ICPD initiatives that had resulted in an overexpenditure of less than $1 million.

Action by the Executive Board

90. The Executive Board approved the proposed programmes for Mongolia (DP/FPA/CP/170) and Nepal (DP/FPA/CP/165) and the requested extensions of, and additional resources for, the country programmes for Bangladesh (DP/FPA/1997/2) and the South Pacific (DP/FPA/1997/3). The delegation of Bangladesh thanked the Board for approving the extension and said that the development of the new programme would provide the opportunity to clear up any misunderstandings that had occurred between the Fund and other development partners. The delegation of Mongolia expressed appreciation for the new programme, saying that the country was grappling with fundamental changes in its economy and social system and that that was leaving some of the most vulnerable parts of society, including women and children, unprotected and requiring assistance. The country strongly endorsed the ICPD. It asked to see the UNFPA country office strengthened and requested donor countries to look carefully at the possibility of supplying multi-bilateral funding under the proposed programme. The representative of Nepal also expressed its gratitude and said that the points in the programme that had been questioned by delegations had been clarified by the Director of the Asia Division. The delegation of Indonesia, speaking for all the countries of the Asia and Pacific region, expressed its thanks to the donor countries and for the explanations of the Director and said that it was glad to see that the Fund would be supporting population and development strategies and contraceptive procurement and logistics management, which it felt were comparative advantages of the Fund.

91. The President ended the discussion by saying that he appreciated the frank responses of the Director of the Asia Division in acknowledging the difficulties encountered by the Fund. Everyone knew that not every story was a success story. He said that it was helpful to the Board to hear about difficulties and problems as well as accomplishments.

Latin America and the Caribbean

Discussion

92. One delegation expressed its appreciation for the informal session, which it felt had been very helpful in understanding the proposed Mexico programme and its goals. In that regard, the delegation was pleased that the programme had been developed using a goal-oriented planning mechanism, which the Government of that delegation had used successfully. Would that mechanism be used to a greater extent in the future? The Deputy Executive Director (Programme) explained that the Fund was going to receive training in logical framework techniques, which she hoped would start to be reflected in country programmes presented to the Board at the third regular session 1997 but not in those presented to the second regular session since those programmes had already been submitted to the United Nations Office for Conference and Support Services for translation, printing and distribution. The Director of the Latin America and Caribbean Division said that the Division was involved in developing a lot of new programmes. She understood that the Board was chiefly interested in understanding the goals and strategies of the proposed programmes, and the Division was working to make sure that they were clearly presented in the country programmes.

Action by the Executive Board

93. The Executive Board approved the proposed programme for Mexico (DP/FPA/CP/161) and the extension of, and additional resources for, the programme for Nicaragua (DP/FPA/1997/1). The delegation of Mexico expressed the appreciation of its Government for the new country programme and noted that the Government of Mexico was making its own efforts to address the needs of disadvantaged parts of the country, especially in the south, and that UNFPA assistance would be a valuable complement to that. The delegation of Nicaragua thanked the Board for the extension, which would help realize the goals of the previous programme, particularly concentrating on the needs of youth and women, who most needed assistance.

III. UNFPA: FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

94. For consideration of agenda item 3, the Executive Board had before it the UNFPA Financial report and audited financial statements for the biennium ended 31 December 1995 and Report of the Board of Auditors (A/51/5/Add.7) and UNFPA: Audit reports (DP/FPA/1997/4).

95. The Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) introduced the reports, highlighting measures taken by UNFPA to implement the recommendations of the Board of Auditors, as indicated in document DP/FPA/1997/4. He emphasized the concerns of the Fund about the qualified audit opinion issued by the Board of Auditors as a result of the late submission of audit certificates for UNFPA-funded projects. Based on the findings of an in-depth review of project audit issues, UNFPA was in the process of revising its financial procedures to enhance internal controls and would institute a new system, to be operational in mid-1997, for monitoring compliance and for follow-up with executing agencies.

Since the qualified audit opinion was closely related to the increase in national execution, UNFPA was undertaking a thematic evaluation of execution modalities, including national execution. Moreover, the Fund had started to revise its national execution guidelines in close consultation with UNDP and was devoting special attention to monitoring issues in the context of new programming procedures.

96. The Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) also stressed that the efforts of individual agencies had to be accompanied by system-wide initiatives, including joint capacity assessments and coordinated strategies at the country level in the context of the resident coordinator system. In concluding, he noted that recent measures by UNFPA had met with the approval of the Board of Auditors, as stated in their report, and pledged UNFPA commitment to the continued improvement of the Fund's management capacity.

Discussion

97. Several delegations thanked the Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) for his statement and for the positive response of UNFPA to the report of the Board of Auditors, as contained in document DP/FPA/1997/4. While the UNFPA proposed course of action was largely endorsed, the Executive Board requested specific timetables for the implementation of the audit recommendations. In particular, UNFPA was asked to provide information on the deadlines set for the preparation of the guidelines and studies mentioned in the document.

98. General concern was expressed about the qualification of the audit opinion and the persistence of problems in compliance with project audit procedures despite previous recommendations on that matter. Several delegations also noted their concern about the Executive Board's findings regarding weaknesses in UNFPA management of the national execution modality. The need for improvements in UNFPA monitoring procedures and field office capacity was emphasized in order to ensure full UNFPA accountability. Increased staff training and the strengthening of field offices were considered important aspects in that process. For example, there was a general need for better control of nationally executed projects. In particular, advances should not be given in the absence of properly signed project documents and letters of understanding. However, UNFPA should not encourage field offices to take over responsibilities of national authorities. Rather, the focus should be on strengthening national capacity for project execution.

99. Some delegations also stressed the importance of a coordinated response from the United Nations development system as a whole. Inter-agency consultations would help avoid the formulation of individual guidelines and training programmes designed to address essentially identical concerns. Noting the Board of Auditors' suggestion for independent audits of sovereign Governments by UNDP, one delegation stressed that the audit certificates of qualified national authorities should continue to be fully accepted by the Board of Auditors. It was also important in that context that national execution guidelines would differentiate properly between countries with a viable, independent audit capacity and those requiring additional support.

100. Several delegations commended the Fund for recent management initiatives such as the establishment of the Task Force on Policies and Procedures. Interest was also expressed in UNFPA experiences to date with the newly created Field Unit to enhance coordination. One delegation requested more information about the operational guidelines for the management of the technical support services (TSS) system and the revised inter-agency guidelines on TSS. With regard to the management of interregional projects, one delegation expressed its concern about the Board of Auditors' findings that projects were lacking clear and quantifiable objectives. It was also suggested that programme management should be improved through the strengthening of more programme evaluations and the inclusion of lessons learned in each PRSD exercise.

101. Concerning the selection and use of consultants, one delegation urged that a more systematic approach should be developed by UNFPA, including the use of the consultants' roster maintained by the Fund. The question was raised whether the selection of consultants from the roster should not be made mandatory. More information was also requested on the procedures for the updating of the consultants' roster, especially at the field level, and on the use of national consultants to enhance capacity-building. In that context, the importance of capacity retention was emphasized. One delegation also requested clarification on the status of negative trust fund balances, of which the Board of Auditors had detected two cases.

102. Most delegations favoured a more regular dialogue on audit issues and the opportunity for closer follow-up by the Executive Board. Given the importance of the Board of Auditors' report, a biennial discussion was considered insufficient to enable close monitoring of UNFPA progress in implementing the audit recommendations. In that context, one delegation suggested that UNFPA should respond more realistically to the audit findings by setting out what could or could not be accomplished within a given time-frame for each recommendation, including conceptual problems and long-term perspectives. Such information would facilitate the monitoring tasks of the Board.

Response of the administration

103. The Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) thanked the Executive Board members for their comments on UNFPA initiatives to implement the audit recommendations. He welcomed the suggestion for closer dialogue with the Board on progress made by UNFPA. Noting the requests for more specific timetables, he explained that many of the guidelines discussed by the Board were to be completed under the work plan of the Task Force on Policies and Procedures by November 1997 although some would be finished earlier. For example, the revised inter-agency guidelines on TSS were already in their final draft form and had been circulated for approval by the Inter-Agency Task Force on the TSS System. Similarly, the thematic evaluation on execution modalities was due to be completed in February 1997.

104. In response to questions about the absorptive capacity study, he noted that the study had originated from the request of the Executive Board at its annual session in May 1996 and would also provide the basis for guidelines on capacity assessments and capacity-building. He stated that the terms of reference for the study had been completed with inputs from members of the Board and thanked

the respective Governments for their valuable contributions. Regarding overall programme management issues, top priority was given by UNFPA to the comprehensive revision of the Fund's programming procedures with special attention to project objectives and enhanced monitoring and evaluation activities. He noted the UNFPA agreement with the need for strengthening programme evaluations and the identification of lessons learned in PRSD exercises. To that end, a new framework for programme and strategy development had been completed. The report was under review by the Task Force on Policies and Procedures.

105. The Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) emphasized that UNFPA management shared the concerns of delegations regarding the qualified audit opinion and the management of national execution. He pointed out that the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, in its comments on the report of the Board of Auditors, had proposed the development of a coordinated strategy by the funds and programmes for addressing shortcomings in that area. UNFPA had welcomed that proposal during the discussion of the Fifth Committee and saw its current consultation with UNDP on the development of national execution guidelines as part of that inter-agency process. At the same time, UNFPA had taken steps to strengthen field office capacity with the assistance of a management adviser to the Executive Director. Particular emphasis in that context was given to the enhancement of the Fund's staff training programme. An evaluation of training activities was under way and its findings would be submitted to the Executive Board at its third regular session 1997.

106. Concerning questions about the use of consultants, UNFPA agreed with the need for more transparency and the better deployment of national consultants. Reminders had been sent in 1996 to the country support teams and country offices to ensure the inclusion of experts at the regional and national levels in the roster maintained at headquarters. The current inter-agency guidelines on TSS emphasized that national consultants constituted the first level of expertise to be used for technical backstopping. That requirement was further highlighted in the revised version of the guidelines.

107. In responding to the query of one delegation about negative trust fund balances, he stated that one of the two cases had been resolved before the preparation of document DP/FPA/1997/4. The other case, reduced to $3,748 at the time, had been cleared by year-end 1996. However, UNFPA would increase its efforts to avoid a recurrence of that problem.

Action by the Board

108. The Executive Board adopted the following decision:

97/2. UNFPA: Audit reports

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the comments made by the United Nations Population Fund in document DP/FPA/1997/4 in response to the recommendations made in the report

of the United Nations Board of Auditors for the biennium 1994-1995 (A/51/5/Add.7);

2. Requests the secretariat to provide the Executive Board, at its first regular session 1998, with an updated overview of the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors and an updated timetable indicating the dates when follow-up action will have been completed in the areas that need to be addressed, namely, trust funds, national execution, technical support services arrangements, management of interregional projects and the selection and use of consultants;

3. Requests the secretariat to provide an update on the progress achieved in the implementation of the recommendations of the auditors at the first regular session of the Executive Board each year, as a matter of routine, under the agenda item "Financial, budgetary and administrative matters".

16 January 1997

IV. UNFPA: COORDINATION IN HEALTH POLICY AND PROGRAMMING

109. The President reminded delegations that at the third regular session 1996, the Executive Board had adopted decision 96/38, which requested the President of the Board to initiate contacts with the Executive Boards of the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF on the possibility of the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board becoming a member of the UNICEF/WHO Joint Committee on Health Policy. In the absence of the outgoing President, Ambassador Annette des Iles, Ms. Cecilia Rebong, outgoing Vice-President, would report to the Board on that initiative.

110. The outgoing Vice-President briefed members on developments to date on actions taken in order for the Executive Board to join the UNICEF/WHO Joint Committee on Health Policy. The President had written to the heads of the Executive Boards of WHO and UNICEF as requested. In the meantime, the Executive Director had written to her counterparts at the two organizations asking for their assistance in bringing the issue to their Boards. The Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) had informed the UNICEF Executive Board at its third regular session 1996 of the decision taken by the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board. The UNICEF Executive Board agreed to consider the question at its first regular session 1997. The Director-General of WHO and the Executive Director of UNICEF addressed a joint letter to the Executive Director of UNFPA laying out proposed arrangements for a new UNICEF/WHO/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health, which they intended to propose to their respective Boards. The UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board had before it, in document DP/FPA/1997/5, those proposed arrangements for its consideration.

111. Delegations welcomed the prompt response of the previous Bureau and the UNFPA secretariat in carrying out decision 96/38. Several delegations reiterated that they continued to feel that UNFPA membership in the Joint Committee would be of value both to the Committee and to the Fund, with one delegation stressing that membership should not place a cumbersome administrative burden on UNFPA. The concern of many delegations was that it was

not clear from the correspondence on that issue that UNFPA would constitute a full member of the new Coordinating Committee. Would, for example, UNFPA be allowed to participate only in discussions that were of "direct relevance" to the Fund? Would the Fund be, in some sense, merely an observer at the Committee proceedings? The commonly expressed view was that the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board should pursue membership only if it was to be on the basis of complete equality with other members.

112. The President asked the Executive Director to address those concerns. She explained that some of the confusion concerning the UNFPA role came from the language of decision 96/38, which called on the Fund to participate as an observer at the Joint Committee's January 1997 meeting. In the meantime, that January meeting had been cancelled so that it was now possible for the Executive Boards of all three organizations to take action for UNFPA to become a full member of the new Coordinating Committee in time for the next scheduled meeting, which would be in May 1997. That new time-frame would provide the opportunity for the secretariats of the three organizations to work on draft terms of reference for the new Coordinating Committee, which could possibly be presented to the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board at its second regular session 1997, scheduled to take place in March. The Executive Director assured the Board that UNFPA would participate on a completely equal basis with the other two member organizations. With that assurance, the Board adopted the following decision:

97/1. UNICEF/WHO/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the note of the President on coordination in health policy and programming: follow-up to Executive Board decision 96/38 (DP/FPA/1997/5);

2. Endorses the proposed arrangements contained in document DP/FPA/1997/5, as follows:

(a) That the present UNICEF/WHO Joint Committee on Health Policy be known as the UNICEF/WHO/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health;

(b) That the terms of reference of the UNICEF/WHO/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health be amended accordingly, in consultation with the secretariats of the three organizations;

(c) That the agenda of the meetings of the UNICEF/WHO/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health be organized in such a way that matters of greatest relevance to the United Nations Population Fund are clustered together;

3. Recommends that the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and of the United Nations Population Fund become a member of the UNICEF/WHO/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health;

4. Requests the President of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and of the United Nations Population Fund, with assistance of the secretariat of the United Nations Population Fund, to bring the present decision to the attention of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Health Organization;

5. Requests the secretariat of the Executive Board to circulate, as soon as they are available, the amended terms of reference of the UNICEF/WHO/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health.

16 January 1997

UNDP/UNFPA SEGMENT

V. HARMONIZATION OF PRESENTATION OF BUDGETS

113. For its consideration of this item, the Executive Board had before it the following documents: Harmonization of budgets: UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF (DP/1997/2 and Add.1) and the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (DP/1997/10).

114. The Assistant Administrator and Director, Bureau of Finance and Administration, UNDP, introduced the item on behalf of both UNDP and UNFPA. He stated that with the presentation of the formal proposals on harmonization to the current session of the Executive Board, the two organizations had reached a remarkable milestone, and that UNICEF planned to present the same proposals to its Executive Board. The Assistant Administrator reviewed the steps that had led to the presentation of the formal proposals.

115. The harmonization project had started in 1994 with decisions adopted by the respective Executive Boards requesting the heads of UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF to work towards harmonizing their presentation of budgets, with a view to achieving common definitions and obtaining a higher degree of financial transparency and comparability. The Board had been informed that work based on the current 1996-1997 budgets of each organization could begin in mid-February 1996. That was owing to the decisions taken by the UNICEF Executive Board, outside the context of the harmonization project, on the integrated budget of UNICEF. As a result, much of the work done on harmonization during 1995 had been superseded.

116. The Assistant Administrator noted that the Executive Board had been kept informed during 1995 and 1996 of the progress made through a number of status reports and working papers. An oral progress report had been given to the Economic and Social Council during its substantive session in 1996. In addition, a number of informal joint meetings of the UNDP/UNFPA and the UNICEF Executive Boards had been held.

117. A number of exchanges on the subject had provided important guiding principles for the project, specifically a comprehensive statement by one delegation, endorsed by other delegations, to both the UNDP/UNFPA and UNICEF Executive Boards. Accordingly, a consensus had been established that harmonization should mean making the budget presentations more similar in order

to promote understanding and support good decision-making, and that similarity should go beyond content and presentation styles alone. Harmonization could and should not mean sameness. It was felt that harmonization should encompass the underlying principles in the preparation of budgets.

118. The Assistant Administrator referred to another important principle that was expressed by the Executive Board during the informal sessions, that analysis and information should support strategic policy development and decision-making by the Executive Boards, rather than overly involving the Boards in budget details.

119. The proposals presented covered: (a) a common format for presentation of the biennial support budgets; (b) common terms and definitions related thereto; and (c) a common methodology for the preparation of the budget estimates.

120. The Assistant Administrator expressed his appreciation for the positive feedback that had already been received informally from some of the delegations. He stated that if the outcome of the harmonization exercise was positive, the credit would also go to the Executive Board and to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ). He noted the constructive support and cooperation provided by members of the Board and by ACABQ over the years. The organizations were particularly encouraged by the comments of ACABQ, in which the Committee stated that the proposals presented would indeed contribute to a comprehensive and transparent budget presentation.

121. All delegations welcomed and congratulated the organizations on arriving at the proposals on the harmonization of budgets. Delegations were appreciative of the hard work and the quality of the work undertaken by the joint UNDP/UNFPA/UNICEF harmonization working group. Delegations were very encouraged by the positive comments of ACABQ on the proposals and agreed that the proposals would indeed contribute to a comprehensive and transparent budget presentation. Some delegations requested the organizations to share their experience with other agencies of the United Nations system so that greater consistency would be promoted in the presentation of the support budgets within the United Nations system.

122. Many delegations noted that the common presentation format, the common terms and definitions, and the common methodology in the preparation of budget estimates would assist the Executive Board in comparing the budgets of the three organizations. The delegations looked forward to the presentation of the 1998-1999 biennial budget proposals under the harmonized approach and saw it as the practical test where further suggestions for refinement could be considered.

123. Several delegations emphasized the importance of monitoring the implementation of the proposals. One delegation, while very pleased with the proposals, referred to its full satisfaction with the UNICEF integrated budget approach, and felt that a similar approach could be useful to UNDP and UNFPA.

124. One delegation stated that it would be useful if the budget compared budgeted (i.e., projected/planned) to actual use of resources. In addition to variance analyses, that delegation also stressed the importance of trend analyses in the context of budgets. The delegation also asked how capital

expenditures on and income from office fund would be separately presented within a capital assets fund that would operate on the basis of appropriations from general resources as a capital budget (see para. 16 of DP/1997/CRP.3).

125. Another speaker expressed appreciation for the remarkable work done and requested that, while the organizations were unique in their missions, the text accompanying the budget tables should be exhaustive and summarized. The same delegation suggested that the general definitions should be supplemented for each individual organization when the actual budgets were presented. In addition, the same delegation also suggested that a table on posts be included, similar to that on the use of resources.

126. One delegation, also speaking on behalf of another, stated that the objectives on harmonization put forward by one delegation in March 1996 and endorsed by the Executive Board, had been achieved. Those objectives covered a common definition and usage of budget terms, commonly accepted accounting approaches and policies, disclosure of basic key information, minimum requirements for content and a common presentational style. The same delegation stated that a consultancy commissioned by a Member State to assess the work carried out and the results achieved had been very positive. The delegation stated that the results achieved had gone a long way in having the budgets simplified, made more transparent and comprehensive and easier to compare. The delegation underlined that it was now the responsibility of the Board to use the tool, by investing time to understand the package and learning to work with it, as a means of managing at a strategic level, and to protect it from dilution. Differences would again occur if the Board were to increase its requests for details that were not of a strategic nature. Finally, the delegation considered it vital that the organizations continue their commitment to harmonization and work towards budgeting for results against planned corporate goals.

127. Another delegation, while commending the organizations for the results achieved, expressed some reservations regarding definitions and terminology. While agreeing with the view of the organizations that a classification based on organizational units was the most practical one, it was not the most logical. The delegation felt that it could accept the definitions provided by the organizations but that clarifications should be provided in the text when the budgets were presented, covering precise descriptions of the activities and outputs, objectives and targets, for purposes of monitoring performance.

128. The same delegation then requested clarification as to how administrative costs for earmarked multi-bi programmes were defined, so as to know whether such programmes were subsidized by the regular budget. In addition, the delegation asked whether the support function at the country level was defined as programme or programme support. Another point mentioned by the same delegation related to the format and contents of the budget mock-up. While commending the format of the tables, the delegation felt that as a result of the weakness of the definitions and the complex nature of the organizations, it was important to specify in more detail what the substantive contents of each budget line included. Finally, the delegation stressed the need for the organizations to continue the harmonization process, including work on common key indicators for measuring performance, such as regular budget compared to extrabudgetary funds,

proportion of administrative budgets derived from various components, professional to non-professional staff and programme funds per position.

129. One delegation requested the organizations to assess the experience of the harmonized approach at the end of the cycle. The same delegation queried as to whether the organizational chart was a hypothetical one, and stated that due recognition be given to the existing organizational structures.

130. Another delegation sought clarification about the Assistant Administrator's statement as to why the harmonization work based on the 1996-1997 budgets had not commenced before mid-February 1996.

131. The President, in summarizing the comments of the delegations, noted the overall positive endorsement of the proposals presented. The Executive Board looked forward to the third regular session, when actual figures would be included under the new format. He encouraged the organizations to share the experience with other agencies of the United Nations system.

132. The Assistant Administrator thanked the President and delegations for their kind words and said that success could not have been achieved without the encouragement of the Executive Board. The groundwork had been undertaken by the three organizations and should be considered one of the major steps in a continuous effort. The actual presentation of the budget with real numbers would help the organizations to deal with remaining issues as they came to light. He stated that the organizations had been keeping the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (Finance and Budget) informed of the progress made. On the subject of capital budgeting for UNDP, the Assistant Administrator mentioned that the subject was related to the Reserve for Field Accommodation, which was not included in the biennial budget. The subject of capital budgeting was under review.

133. The Chief of Budget, UNDP, stated that the harmonization working group was well aware that the current proposals were only the beginning of the process, and that with actual numbers more experience would be gained.

134. Regarding the need for more detail in the main document, the Chief of Budget, UNDP, indicated that the approach had been to keep the main document at the aggregate level and that detailed information could be made available upon request. It should be noted that in the actual document there would be narratives that were not included in the mock-up and that would provide substantive information and justification to support the budget proposals.

135. With regard to definitions, the Chief of Budget, UNDP, mentioned that the organizations were aware that more work was needed. He stated that such refinement would happen when the actual budgets were prepared. Similarly, both the Director, Division of Finance, Personnel and Administration, UNFPA, and Chief of Budget, UNDP, indicated that the differences between programmes, programme support and management and administration would be fully clarified when required.

136. Regarding the query on the organizational chart in the mock-up, the Chief of Budget, UNDP, indicated that it was indeed a hypothetical one, and that the

relevant actual organizational chart of each organization would be included when the budgets were presented.

137. On the query regarding the delay by the organizations in commencing the harmonization work based on the 1996-1997 budgets, the Chief of Budget, UNDP, stated that UNICEF had been obligated to present to its Executive Board its new integrated budget outside the harmonization process. The 1996-1997 UNICEF budget had therefore not been available prior to February 1996.

138. The Director of the Division of Finance, Personnel and Administration, UNFPA, also thanked the delegations for their positive comments, and agreed that the first step had indeed been taken. She indicated that with the real budget proposals the organizations could fine tune the presentations as necessary.

139. With regard to the relationship between the administrative and programme budgets, the Director, UNFPA, indicated that there would be some information in the budget document. However, more information would be presented in other documents, such as the work plan.

140. On revised estimates, the Director, UNFPA, indicated that while ACABQ had some comments, they did not have any problems. The Chief of Budget, UNDP, stated that owing to the timing of the preparation of budget documents for the Executive Board, it had not been possible to include actual expenditures.

141. The Director, UNFPA, stated that the organizations were committed to not allowing harmonization to lapse and to avoiding the inclusion of too much detail, so that the current proposals would remain a tool for strategic decision-making. On the treatment of support costs covering multi-bi assistance, the Director, UNFPA, indicated that it was based on incremental costs.

142. With regard to earmarked resources, the Chief of Budget, UNDP, stated that the resource planning table would provide, in a very clear and transparent manner, the use of such resources, by location, for programmes, programme support and management and administration.

143. The Executive Board approved the proposed format for the biennial support budget of UNDP and UNFPA as contained in document DP/1997/2.

UNDP SEGMENT

Statement by the Administrator

144. The Administrator welcomed the new members and Bureau of the Executive Board and paid tribute to the outgoing Bureau and Board members. He expected that 1997 would be a productive year, with constructive dialogue, decisions approved by consensus, and enhanced working methods. He underlined the challenges and opportunities of 1997, noting the new era ushered in by the election of the new Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan. Key issues in 1997 included the acceleration of the implementation of landmark legislation adopted by the Board, delivery of the UNDP programme, accountability, and the change

management process. A vision of where UNDP should be in the twenty-first century was emerging. That vision included better definition of the relationship with development partners, improvement of the lives of people living in poverty, the evolution of a learning organization, and the utilization of country-specific experience. UNDP would be value-driven, well-managed and responsible, as well as efficient and decisive. Recommendations from the change process would be presented to the Board at its annual session. The recommendations would focus on quality service to programme countries, effectiveness and impact, and efficiency and accountability.

145. The Administrator underlined the importance of the work plan for 1997. He noted the attention being given to ensuring that the discussion at the annual session would be interesting and focused, and that it would include a high-level panel on poverty eradication. He then reviewed a number of events that had taken place since the previous session and welcomed the questions and comments of the Executive Board on his remarks.

146. Several delegations welcomed the Administrator's statement. One delegation requested information on the accountability framework. Another stressed the importance of monitoring programme delivery in 1997 and requested information on quantitative targets for delivery. Monitoring the success of the country cooperation frameworks was also a priority. One speaker underlined the importance of looking at issues from the perspective of the country level. Continued dialogue with the Executive Board on the change process was encouraged.

147. One delegation requested information on how UNDP could guarantee meeting the resource mobilization target of $3.3 billion included in Executive Board decision 95/23. Another delegation noted that with the rise in non-core funding, it seemed that the Board was governing only one third of the funding of UNDP. More information on the appropriateness of non-core funding activities of the UNDP programme was sought.

148. One speaker, on behalf of the African Group, pledged its intention to work with other regional representatives in 1997 to strengthen UNDP country offices and to support the resident coordinator system. Funding of the core budget was essential. More concrete reporting on the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for Africa would be welcomed.

149. The Administrator stated that the accountability framework would be discussed further at the present and future sessions as well as within the context of the change management process. He anticipated that "knowledge networks" would be set up as part of overall enhanced information systems in UNDP. An expanded internal audit function was envisaged. Empowerment of people living in poverty would be stressed, with UNDP working in complementarity with other United Nations entities. He informed the Executive Board that targets had been set for programme delivery, which was the first priority of UNDP. A six-month travel restriction on senior managers and resident representatives was one of the measures that had been implemented recently.

150. One delegation requested information on the relationship of UNDP with the World Bank. Another delegation emphasized the need to maintain adequate field

structures in all regions. Several speakers welcomed the Administrator's efforts to mobilize core resources, with some noting that UNDP could not undertake that activity alone. One delegation suggested that special schemes could be utilized to enhance resource mobilization. The speaker also saw linkage between resource mobilization and an information strategy that would have a positive influence on the public in donor countries. Sound and clear evaluation of impact of UNDP programmes, or success stories, was needed to enhance the public image of the organization. One delegation suggested greater involvement of the private sector in resource mobilization.

151. Another speaker requested information on how UNDP was helping to disseminate information on goals endorsed by the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD/DAC) and contained in the document entitled "Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Cooperation". More information was sought about the role of the Administrator as Special Coordinator for Economic and Social Development.

152. The Administrator stated that he would welcome greater involvement of the Executive Board in responsibility for programmes involving non-core resources. Enhanced coordination at the country level was of the utmost importance, as was having the best staff as resident coordinators. He noted that resident representatives were being appointed from other United Nations entities. He drew the attention of the Board to two papers distributed at the present session: one on the role of UNDP and the resident coordinator, and another on his work as Special Coordinator for Economic and Social Development. With regard to the OECD/DAC goals for the twenty-first century, he underlined the confluence of interests between UNDP and OECD/DAC. The two organizations were cooperating closely in the areas of poverty eradication and follow-up to conferences. The relationship between UNDP and the World Bank was quite good, including through work in the follow-up to international conferences and the Special Initiative for Africa. He commented on various aspects of United Nations reform, including efforts within individual United Nations bodies, with regard to inter-agency machinery, and at the broader intergovernmental level. In response to a query raised, he stated that UNDP would pay due attention to staffing levels and field structure in the budget strategy for 1998-1999. He welcomed the remarks made regarding resource mobilization, impact assessment and enhanced cooperation with the private sector. With regard to the latter, he noted the plan to have a committee for UNDP in the United States of America, an effort that he hoped would be replicated in other regions.

VI. COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS

First global cooperation framework

153. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support (BPPS) introduced the revised text of the first global cooperation framework (DP/GCF/1). He noted that the revised paper would have benefited from an earlier consultation process. He reviewed the concerns raised at the third regular session 1996 during the discussion of the first version of the global cooperation framework. He also made several comments regarding the

overall role and importance of the global programme. It addressed problems common to many programme countries relating to sustainable human development (SHD) in general but more specifically to issues such as water supply, food security, sustainable energy, health research, and HIV/AIDS. Evaluations of the Special Programme Resources and the global and interregional programmes had pointed out shortcomings but had also made a strong case for the role of intercountry programmes in UNDP. He noted a number of the more critical observations of the evaluations, including the multiplicity of areas of concentration, which created a fragmented programme; the difficulty of evaluating programmes in the area; low priority to building partnerships; and the low degree of visibility within UNDP. He recognized the need for greater focus but also emphasized the need for flexibility since the global programme represented the only budget line through which UNDP could respond to emerging issues and support important global partnerships.

154. The current global programme differed from its predecessors in both substantive focus and programme management, as well as in overall funding levels and resource allocation within the programme. The vast majority of global programme resources would be spent in the following areas: macro-policy frameworks for SHD; energy, food security and water for the rural and urban poor; sustainable livelihoods, improved capabilities, and job creation for the poor; national capacity-building for gender analysis and gender-sensitive policy and legal frameworks; governance institutions; and public sector management. Within that context, the global programme aimed at analysing important issues and trends of relevance to SHD where multilateral cooperation could play a role in terms of advocacy and/or capacity-building. It would also be used to support global partnerships in responding to key challenges in UNDP focus areas. A significant share of the resources would be used for strategy and methodology development, as well as for the testing of programme tools and instruments. UNDP would aim to improve the quality of information available to decision makers, including the development of indicators and benchmarks, as well as the use of information technology to advance further sustainable development and poverty reduction.

155. A second category of resources would be available to respond to new and emerging issues, to honour long-standing commitments to global partnerships, and to support a limited number of issues covered in the framework.

156. Many delegations commented on document DP/GCF/1 and the introduction by the Assistant Administrator. Most delegations stated that while the information provided orally at the session was very useful, document DP/GCF/1 did not address adequately the concerns raised at the third regular session. While some speakers stated that they could approve the framework if a strategy paper on global cooperation was presented at a future session, others stated that they were not in a position to accept the framework at all at the current session. Some delegations noted that an accurate picture of the activities in the global programme should be provided in the document. Greater clarity, specificity, prioritization, and incorporation of evaluation findings were needed. One speaker, on behalf of the African Group, said that the basic layout of the framework, including the themes, was acceptable, and queried whether South-South or triangular cooperation could be incorporated. A number of delegations asked that the findings of the evaluation of global, interregional and regional

programmes issued in November 1996 be taken into account in the global framework. Several delegations stressed the importance of performance indicators and benchmarks to the programme. It was mentioned that UNDP could work with donor agencies in some areas covered by the framework.

157. One delegation stated that they could not approve the document because it entailed endorsing the spending of $126 million to be available under line 1.3 for the period 1997-1999. The document needed to be more specific to justify spending that amount of money. The delegation acknowledged that the Executive Board had not been precise enough in their instructions but emphasized that greater time and energy was needed to elaborate a new document. The document should include specific structured objectives with project descriptions, amounts of allocation for delivery of the projects, reflection of evaluation findings, project-by-project value added and impact in the field, and demonstration of the comparative advantage of UNDP in its interventions. Another delegation underlined that the format of a country cooperation framework should not be applied for the global cooperation framework. The global framework needed to be more specific. Inclusion of strategic thinking and an outline for implementation was essential. One speaker noted that UNDP was already authorized to begin to implement its global cooperation framework, but new activities should not be started until a further plan was presented and approved by the Executive Board.

158. The need for a clear division of labour on global programmes with other organizations was underlined by several delegations. One delegation requested information on what projects would be cut if there was a shortage of funds and whether opportunities existed for co-financing. One delegation stated that the Executive Board did not need all the details of the projects since that would entail micro-management. However, as another speaker noted, accountability was a key issue and the Executive Board needed to be assured that the activities in the global framework were supportable. Several delegations emphasized the need for a more cross-sectoral view of the areas of gender and environment. One delegation underlined the importance of the use of indicators to achieve the goals of the global programme, and requested information about collaboration of UNDP with OECD/DAC in that area. Another speaker stressed the importance of linkage with the follow-up to international global conferences.

159. The Assistant Administrator assured the Executive Board that consultations would be held at an early stage with regard to any future documentation on the global programme. A series of brownbag luncheons would be planned to discuss the issues raised by the Executive Board. In response to a query raised, he stated that the table containing percentages of resources to be allocated in the global programme had been omitted from the revised framework because detailed project descriptions were not currently available, making it difficult to provide an accurate breakdown of resource allocation by theme. Such information would be available only in 1998 or 1999. He noted that line 1.3 provided funding for a flexible response by UNDP to important upcoming SHD requirements. UNDP would avoid duplication of activities undertaken by other organizations. Its participation in joint activities with other United Nations agencies provided for a coordinated response to problems. The Assistant Administrator noted that UNDP could not abruptly discontinue its commitment to major co-financing arrangements, even when its financial contribution was minor,

although such arrangements might be gradually phased out. UNDP relied on the expertise available in other institutions through those partnerships.

160. He underlined the greater focus that had been included in the draft framework presented at the current session. Greater clustering of the 25 categories shown in the document could be undertaken to show fewer categories, with some subcategories being phased out. The Assistant Administrator assured the Executive Board that while it would be possible to include even greater focus in the framework, UNDP had listened to the comments of Board members at the third regular session 1996 and would continue to move in the direction of much greater focus. He reiterated that it would be difficult at the current time to provide a breakdown of amount to be spent by category.

161. In response to a query, he noted that private sector activities had not been elaborated in the document. There were important interventions in that area, including work on micro-credits and micro-enterprises, but it remained a small component of the overall programme. He also underlined that managers were instructed to incorporate gender mainstreaming and environmental sustainability in their programmes. With regard to linkages with country programmes, global partnerships aimed at expanding membership with the South, as well as technical cooperation and capacity-building. UNDP was working with other organizations on development of indicators, particularly with regard to situation analysis.

162. The Administrator thanked the Executive Board for its helpful and constructive comments. He assured the Board that the results of evaluations would be taken into account in developing a strategy and implementation framework for the global programme. UNDP would bring a heightened sense of priorities and focus to the programme and make a concerted effort to prioritize and eliminate those activities not related to its core mission. UNDP shared the concern of the Executive Board that even greater focus could be given to the global programme. A chart on the UNDP areas of focus was distributed to the Board. The Administrator noted that the chart also showed the framework for follow-up to international conferences. He expected to bring a quantitative allocation of resources to the programme as early as possible. Partnerships and co-financing brought a diversity of approaches and were very valuable. Co-financing brought in needed resources and helped to avoid overlaps between activities in different organizations. It enabled UNDP to be a participant in large processes where it could represent the interests of programme countries.

163. The Executive Board approved the following decision:

97/5. First global cooperation framework

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the revised draft of the first global cooperation framework as contained in document DP/GCF/1, as well as the statements of the Administrator and the Assistant Administrator on the revised draft;

2. Recalls its decision 96/42;

3. Requests the Administrator, taking into account the comments made by members of the Executive Board at the current session, to elaborate further the first global cooperation framework draft, through early consultation with the Board, and to produce for the third regular session 1997 a revised proposal for consideration and approval by the Board; this proposal shall include a strategic plan for implementation and take into account the following guidelines:

(a) The need to take fully into account the findings of the United Nations Development Programme evaluation "Global interregional and regional programmes: an evaluation of impact" (November 1996) as well as the comments of delegations at the current session;

(b) The need to focus on programme activities that: (i) have a global nature and perspective; (ii) cannot be implemented under regional or country programmes; (iii) can enhance national efforts to achieve Sustainable Human Development;

(c) The need to prioritize programme activities and focus them, within its existing mandate and on priority areas, where the United Nations Development Programme can make a real difference;

(d) The need to avoid duplication while strengthening collaboration with relevant bodies within and external to the United Nations system;

4. Stresses that the revised proposal should:

(a) Contain, for the information of the Board, a detailed overview of ongoing activities which will be discontinued during 1997-1999;

(b) Specify how programme activities will be monitored and evaluated, based on performance indicators and benchmarks, particularly concerning their impact at the country level;

5. Decides that in the meantime:

(a) Activities for which commitments have already been made shall continue;

(b) Up to a total of 33.3 per cent from the global resources under line 1.3 can be committed for activities, in a manner consistent with the guidelines outlined in paragraphs 3(a) to 3(d) of the present decision;

(c) The revised proposal should include, as an annex, a list of ongoing and planned activities for the information of the Executive Board.

17 January 1997

Regional cooperation framework for Latin America and the Caribbean

164. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean (RBLAC) introduced the regional cooperation framework

for Latin America and the Caribbean (DP/RCF/RLA/1). He noted that wide consultations had been undertaken with Governments in preparing the regional cooperation framework. UNDP would work with many different networks in fulfilling the goals of regional cooperation, including academic institutions and NGOs. Technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC) would continue to be increased. Gender mainstreaming was also a key feature of the new framework. Indicators for success would be identified at the stage of project design in order to determine better the impact of projects in the regional programme.

165. One delegation, on behalf of the Latin America and Caribbean region, thanked the RBLAC for the regional cooperation framework, which was strategic and focused. Although the region was diverse, the framework demonstrated that its constituent countries could be brought together on a number of issues that formed regional priorities. The preparatory process, which had included extensive consultations at the regional level, was most appreciated.

166. Several delegations expressed wide support for the framework, including the incorporation of results and lessons learned from past cooperation, in particular the importance of prior consultations in drawing up the framework, fewer projects with greater focus and the importance given to evaluation. Many speakers cited the relevance of the proposed strategy and thematic areas outlined in the document, highlighting particular areas of interest, notably science and technology, trade, the needs of small island developing countries and TCDC. Some speakers underlined the need to raise additional resources for the implementation of the programme. One delegation welcomed the participation of UNDP in multi-bi cooperation in the region and offered its support to strengthen it further. Several delegations underlined the need to highlight the interventions in gender mainstreaming and the environment.

167. One delegation asked how the regional programme would relate to the global cooperation framework and to what extent poverty eradication was addressed in the programme. It also requested more information on the establishment of information systems and the provision of services to mobilize additional resources in the region referred to in paragraph 12 of the document. Another delegation requested information about a specific framework for the Caribbean subregion and about references to working with the media to encourage democracy, and queried whether the resources for particular activities had been earmarked. That speaker also requested further information from UNDP on the funding for each region.

168. The Assistant Administrator underlined the interlinkage of the regional and national themes and priorities. There had been close collaboration with national focal points and with the country offices in developing the regional cooperation framework. Local offices would assume coordination of the links between regional and national programmes. He noted that poverty eradication was well incorporated in the programme, including through Global Environment Facility (GEF) projects. In response to a query, he stated that the supply of services was self-financed. He underlined the increased attention RBLAC would devote to evaluation activities. For example, an impartial evaluation on progress in gender mainstreaming would be undertaken. He noted that the focal points for gender typically were also the focal points for poverty in country

offices. The linkage of the regional programme with the global programme was outlined, with particular reference to interventions in the area of governance. Information on activities in governance in the region was distributed to the Executive Board.

169. The Assistant Administrator underlined the commitment of UNDP to working with all countries and welcomed the possibility for multi-bi cooperation. He noted that UNDP cooperated with the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and that 25 per cent of the regional programme was devoted to the Caribbean subregion. By theme, the regional programme devoted 60 per cent of its resources to poverty eradication and governance; 20 per cent to environment; 15 per cent to trade and integration; and 5 per cent to science and technology. Through the Regional programme, RBLAC was exploring ways of cooperating with the media in promoting ideas relating to sustainable development and specifically to the culture of democracy.

170. The Associate Administrator informed the Executive Board that each regional bureau in UNDP had agreed to earmark a minimum of 20 per cent for gender-in-development activities in their respective regional programmes. The internal Programme Management Oversight Committee would monitor that aspect of the programmes. Other means of strengthening gender mainstreaming were through the use of regional programme advisers of UNIFEM, the development of models for gender mainstreaming, and the possible use of United Nations Volunteers specialists as gender-in-development advisers in country offices. He informed the Executive Board that 90 per cent of the total resources available annually to regional programmes had been distributed based upon proportionality of country resources for each region with the balance of 10 per cent divided equally among the Regional Bureau for Arab States, RBLAC and the Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States. All regional programmes would receive more resources in the successor programming arrangements, with the largest proportion on an annual basis attributed to Africa ($30.3 million), followed by Asia and the Pacific ($22.394 million), Arab States ($7.657 million), Latin America and the Caribbean ($6.925 million) and Eastern Europe/Commonwealth of Independent States ($6.742 million).

171. The Executive Board approved the regional cooperation framework for Latin America and the Caribbean (DP/RCF/RLA/1).

First country cooperation framework for Belize (DP/CCF/BEL/1)

172. The Assistant Administrator noted that the cooperation of UNDP with Belize was covered from El Salvador. Extrabudgetary funding supported one international professional to cover the Belize programme. The programme focused on poverty eradication and capacity development as well as sustainable environment. It was hoped that the seed capital of $300,000 in Belize would attract more funding.

173. The first country cooperation framework for Belize (DP/CCF/BEL/1) was approved by the Executive Board on a no-objection basis.

174. The representative of Belize expressed his Government's appreciation for the past and current assistance provided by UNDP to Belize. It was hoped that

the sub-office would be strengthened with the provision of an international officer and the implementation of planned programmes. The Government of Belize pledged its cooperation to the implementation of the programme.

Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States

General discussion

175. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (RBEC) introduced the six country cooperation frameworks presented to the Executive Board on a no-objection basis under the provisions of Board decision 96/7. The documents before the Board were the first country cooperation frameworks for the Czech Republic (DP/CCF/CZE/1), Hungary (DP/CCF/HUN/1), Kazakstan (DP/CCF/KAZ/1), Kyrgyzstan (DP/CCF/KYR/1), Moldova (DP/CCF/MOL/1) and Slovakia (DP/CCF/SLO/1). It was noted that five written requests for discussion by the Board of the frameworks for Kyrgyzstan and Slovakia had been received and thus, in accordance with Executive Board decision 96/7, those CCFs would be discussed by the Board.

176. The Assistant Administrator referred to several characteristics of UNDP programmes in the region: the preparation of national human development reports and project achievement reports supported by regional programme funds, promotion of national execution as the modality of choice, focus on upstream intervention, the heavy workload of resident coordinators, who were often without a Deputy or Assistant Resident Representative, in addition to being the only United Nations presence in the country, and policies that promoted SHD. He added that several countries had requested UNDP to assist them in their graduation from grant assistance to emerging donors, including support for their goal to join regional associations in the region. UNDP was ready to help, particularly in view of the potential for TCDC, especially between the Eastern and Central European and the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Latin America and the Caribbean regions.

177. RBEC planned to establish, within the current budget, a UNDP liaison unit in those countries in the region without UNDP offices (Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia). The concept of networking-for-development, enabled by the liaison units placed in each country, would soften the graduation process of those countries. The network would be coordinated and supported by an additional RBEC initiative, the Learning Centre, to be located in Bratislava, Slovakia, which would be engaged in outreach-support activities and organizing learning events. The Learning Centre would provide a cost-effective means of helping RBEC to manage programmes in countries without a fully-fledged office.

178. The CCFs for Kazakstan, Krygyzstan and Moldova reflected an active UNDP presence in each of those countries. Bilateral donors counted on the development services role UNDP could play on their behalf, as reflected in substantial cost-sharing in Krygyzstan and Moldova. The UNDP Resident Representative in Krygyzstan was present at the Executive Board. He had opened the UNDP Office in that country and had recently received national recognition as "Man of the Year".

179. Several delegations expressed their appreciation for the work of UNDP in the region, particularly in view of the low level of resources, both human and financial, available to RBEC to carry out its activities. The innovative and diverse approaches taken by RBEC in its work in the region, taking into account individual cases and needs, was much appreciated. It was hoped that within the context of the next budget strategy the region would receive increased resources in terms of staff and operational support. Particular attention was given to strengthening both headquarters and country offices in the region. The high degree of cost-sharing by bilateral donors and the Governments had contributed to the success of several programmes. Delegations supported the use of national execution and TCDC in the CCFs before the Board. Several speakers emphasized the importance of continued assistance to all countries in transition.

180. One delegation referred to the UNDP project to assist countries to gain membership in regional associations, noting the assistance needed by Governments for improved functioning and reorganization, as well as the need for increased competitiveness in global markets. For the countries associated with the European Union and those aspiring to that status, the question of adaptation to the Union's standards and mechanisms was vital. The same delegation suggested that some countries in transition would have to re-examine their external aid policies. The representative also noted that the report to the Executive Board on interregional cooperation to the annual session 1997 would be useful in evaluating achievements in the area of promoting innovative means of cooperation between all UNDP programme countries.

181. The representatives of the Czech Republic, Kazakstan, and Moldova took the floor to express appreciation for the ongoing cooperation with UNDP in their countries. The representative of Moldova asked for clarification of the inclusion of the line for "other resources" in the financial annex for the CCF of Moldova. He indicated that it was his understanding that the "other" resources would be incorporated into line 1.1.1, target for resource assignment from the core (TRAC) and utilized without any limitations. If the "other resources" line was to remain, TRAC line 1.1.1 would then, for all CCFs, appear without the "floor", with the remaining balance to be shown in the "other resources" line. He asked the Board to consider the issue at the second regular session 1997. That position was shared by another delegation who requested that all resource allocation criteria, including administrative budget allocations, be equal for all UNDP programme countries.

182. One delegation queried how UNDP had helped countries to join the European Union and the success of that activity. Another speaker, noting the many actors in the region, requested more information on the comparative advantage of UNDP. Some delegations asked for more specific references to gender-in-development activities while others supported more systematic and clear references to lessons learned in the frameworks. One delegation requested that UNDP include a list of socio-economic indicators on the front page of the CCF, as UNFPA did for its country programmes.

183. The Assistant Administrator, commenting on the CCFs considered at the current session, informed the Board that administrative costs and the number of posts per country office were on average only 50 per cent of those for comparable UNDP offices in other regions. Although exact figures were not

available, he noted that the percentage of costs for expatriate consultants and for equipment were generally low. With regard to assistance to countries intending to join the European Union, UNDP cooperation entailed training activities, which had been coordinated with the European Commission. He underlined that each country had a gender unit that promoted networking on a national basis. Evaluation and monitoring was taking place under the agreed terms of UNDP policies and procedures.

Country cooperation framework for Kyrgyzstan (DP/CCF/KYR/1)

184. The representative of Kyrgyzstan praised the work of UNDP in that country, where UNDP had played a principal coordinating role despite modest human resources. The cost-sharing of donors was appreciated. UNDP was asked to continue its assistance to relief following an earthquake in Krygyzstan.

185. A number of delegations cited the framework as a good example of its kind, particularly because it demonstrated concrete projects. One delegation requested more information on the scope of activity involving NGOs and about the carry-over of knowledge from the previous regime. UNDP was also asked about its relationship with other partners, including the World Bank. It was noted that the high rate of cost-sharing in Krygyzstan was attributable to the Government of the Netherlands.

186. The Resident Representative in Kyrgyzstan, in response to a query, stated that indicators on the country were available from the Ministry of Economics and could be annexed to the framework. He informed the Executive Board of the percentage breakdowns of the focus areas for the CCF: 24 per cent for poverty eradication; 12 per cent for job creation and private sector activities; 38 per cent for gender; and 16 per cent for the environment. The CCF reflected many inputs, including those of the private sector. UNDP worked in coordination with the United Nations bodies, including the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, and bilateral donors. UNDP cooperated with NGOs in several fields. He noted that there was substantial national capacity in the country.

First country cooperation framework for Slovakia (DP/CCF/SLO/1)

187. The representative of Slovakia appreciated the cooperation provided by UNDP which, despite the low level of resources, had contributed to the development of his country. His Government welcomed the new modalities of cooperation, as addressed by the Assistant Administrator.

188. Information was requested on the distribution of funding by sector, the level of Government contribution, and the rate of programme delivery during 1993-1996. The section on results and lessons learned was helpful in understanding the problems of the previous country programme, which had been too fragmented.

189. The Assistant Administrator explained that the high carry-over from the previous programming period resulted in part from the approval of an independence bonus in September 1996. He added that after the publication of the country cooperation framework, it appeared that delivery rates were actually

higher than shown. The framework would also be updated regarding the contribution of the Government.

190. The first country cooperation frameworks for Czech Republic (DP/CCF/CZE/1), Hungary (DP/CCF/HUN/1), Kazakstan (DP/CCF/KAZ/1), Kyrgysztan (DP/CCF/KYR/1), Moldova (DP/CCF/MOL/1) and Slovakia (DP/CCF/SLO/1) were approved on a no-objection basis.

Extension of the sixth country programme for Jordan (DP/CP/JOR/6/EXTENSION I)

Extension of the fifth country programme for Bahrain (DP/CP/BAH/5/EXTENSION I)

Extension of the sixth country programme for Algeria (DP/CP/ALG/6/EXTENSION I)

191. The President informed the Executive Board that it was within the prerogative of the Administrator to extend country programmes. The extensions of the sixth country programme for Jordan (DP/CP/JOR/6/EXTENSION I), the fifth country programme for Bahrain (DP/CP/BAH/5/EXTENSION I) and the sixth country programme for Algeria (DP/CP/ALG/6/EXTENSION I) were presented for the information of the Board.

192. The Assistant Administrator and Regional Director of the Regional Bureau for Arab States introduced the documents containing the extensions. He noted that the extensions were for one year, beginning 1 January 1997. CCFs for the countries would be submitted to the Executive Board in January 1998. In each of the three cases, there had been different reasons for extensions. In Bahrain, in the situation following the Gulf War, the Government had experienced difficulty in producing cost-sharing towards the programme. In Algeria, the extension had been prompted by the low delivery rate. In Jordan, the programming cycle was being harmonized with those of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy partners and reoriented to meet the provisions of the SHD mandate.

193. The Executive Board took note of the extensions of the sixth country programme for Jordan (DP/CP/JOR/6/EXTENSION I), the fifth country programme for Bahrain (DP/CP/BAH/5/EXTENSION I) and the sixth country programme for Algeria (DP/CP/ALG/6/EXTENSION I).

Assistance to Myanmar

194. The Assistant Administrator and Regional Director of the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific introduced the note by the Administrator on assistance to Myanmar (DP/1997/4). The purpose of the note was to assess the extent to which assistance provided to Myanmar continued to meet the provisions of Executive Board decision 96/1 and Governing Council decision 93/21. He noted two main developments: the 15 projects of the Human Development Initiative (HDI) 1994-1996 had been completed and the ten projects comprising the Human Development Initiative Extension (HDI-E) (1996-1998) had been formulated and approved in strict accordance with Board decision 96/1. An independent team of experts had undertaken a mission to Myanmar in September 1996, in order to assess the results and achievements of the HDI and to see to what extent it continued to meet the provisions of relevant legislation. The assessment report

had been made available to Board members. The Assistant Administrator referred to the assessment and major findings of the report, which showed that the results, impact and lessons learned from the HDI were evident. Additional information had been provided at an informal briefing held on 14 January. The HDI-E projects would be implemented by United Nations specialized agencies. Greater efforts had been made to enhance cooperation with NGOs, both international and national, especially with regard to facilitating community participation at the grass-roots level. Concerns on monitoring and assessment had been taken into account and would continue to be addressed during implementation of HDI-E project activities. Local embassies continued to be fully briefed by the UNDP Resident Representative. Regular visits to HDI project sites would enable embassy officials to observe UNDP activities at the community and grass-roots level. Four field visits had been organized during 1996. Regular briefings for civil society organizations were organized by the Resident Representative. Critical humanitarian needs at the grass-roots level were being addressed.

195. Several delegations noted that their embassies in Yangon had commented favourably on the UNDP programme in Myanmar, citing in particular the framework provided by the HDI-E for grass-roots activities. UNDP was encouraged to explore a further expansion of its activities that would bring maximum benefit to local populations in Myanmar. The field visits were noted as very useful. One delegation asked about the total budget for the 15 projects; the ratio of international to national consultants; the amount of the budget devoted to benefiting grass-roots populations; how the townships for UNDP projects had been chosen; and the experience of UNDP in maintaining political neutrality. Another delegation sought information on whether there were problems in monitoring the human development level in certain states in Myanmar. Several delegations underlined the importance attached to monitoring of UNDP activities in Myanmar.

196. One delegation, on behalf of another, and also supported by another, cited the continued deterioration of human rights in Myanmar. It was essential that the provisions of General Assembly resolution 51/117 be upheld. UNDP was encouraged to adhere to Governing Council decision 93/21 and to seek the broadest possible range of contacts in the country, including opposition leaders, in order to broaden the scope of its activity. More information on cooperation with NGOs was sought. Another delegation encouraged UNDP to cooperate with the United Nations in its activities in Myanmar.

197. The Resident Representative in Myanmar stated that UNDP had complied with the guidelines and criteria legislated by the Executive Board. Monitoring and evaluation remained important aspects of the programme. UNDP intended to continue monitoring the impact of its programme at the grass-roots level and in the townships as well as the HDI-E programme as a whole. At the township level, a large cadre of national professionals would be recruited by UNDP and be solely accountable to UNDP. The key goals of the HDI support project were to ensure development and to ensure that the needs of the poorest people were met. The HDI provided for two full-time monitoring and evaluation officers accountable solely to UNDP. More than $50 million of the approved $52.076 million had been programmed. Covered within that amount was funding for primary health care, water supply and sanitation, HIV/AIDS, basic education, sustainable livelihoods, and the HDI support project, all targeted towards the poor. National personnel

were the largest group employed by the HDI-E project. UNDP was cooperating with national and international NGOs, an activity that would be enhanced in the future.

198. The Assistant Administrator said more information would be provided as needed. He confirmed that UNDP and the HDI-E would adhere to the decisions of the Executive Board and target poverty eradication, grass-roots impact and the involvement of NGOs and would uphold the resolutions of the General Assembly. National officers were recruited by UNDP and were accountable to UNDP.

199. The Executive Board took note of the note of the Administrator on assistance to Myanmar (DP/1997/4).

VII. FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Audit reports: follow-up to recommendations of the report of the Board of Auditors

200. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Finance and Administration (BFA) brought to the attention of the Executive Board the report of the Board of Auditors for the biennium 1994-1995 (A/51/5/Add.1) and introduced the report of the Administrator on the follow-up to recommendations of the report of the Board of Auditors (DP/1997/3). He noted that the report of the Board of Auditors had been considered in November 1996 by the Fifth Committee at its fifty-first session. At that time, UNDP had presented, through the Secretary-General and ACABQ, a status report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors (A/51/488/Add.2). The report of ACABQ was contained in document A/51/533. The resolution on the matter had been deferred until the resumed session of the General Assembly. The Assistant Administrator expressed his appreciation to the Board of Auditors, who had thoroughly reviewed the management and financial systems of UNDP and had engaged in an open and constructive dialogue with UNDP during the exercise. UNDP placed the highest priority on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors and had already taken steps to follow up on the recommendations in the report.

201. The Assistant Administrator addressed the main recommendations of the Board of Auditors and highlighted the actions taken to date. He noted with concern that the Board of Auditors had qualified its opinion on UNDP financial statements because of the outstanding audit certificates for national execution expenditures. That issue had been brought to the attention of recipient Governments. He informed the Executive Board that UNDP had initiated a review of the current audit strategy of national execution in consultation with the Board of Auditors and expected to propose to the Board a revision to the relevant UNDP Financial Regulations and Rules at the third regular session 1997. He noted that UNDP was in the process of finalizing a document proposing a re-definition of the objectives and strategy for national execution, including revised guidelines and procedures. A progress report would be submitted to the Board at its second regular session 1997. A revised monitoring and evaluation system, in particular to address national execution, including revised guiding principles, was being prepared. The revised guidelines on national execution

would facilitate the identification of gaps in government capacity in a more effective way. With regard to internal audit functions, the Assistant Administrator noted that UNDP had been able to expand audit coverage by allocating significant additional resources for the contracting of audit services to major international audit firms and the establishment of two regional service centres to service Africa and Asia and the Pacific. High priority had been placed on the internal audit function, including its staffing level, within the context of the change management process. Recommendations regarding the Reserve for Field Accommodation would be dealt with in the discussion of that item.

202. The Director of External Audit, United Kingdom, thanked the Assistant Administrator for his remarks and noted the constructive working relationship that existed between UNDP and the Board of Auditors.

203. Several delegations referred to the recommendations concerning national execution, underlining the need to assess government capacity in that regard and to develop capacity assessment guidelines for its use. Country offices must be able to monitor the modality adequately. One delegation noted the importance of Governments having a role in developing projects and standards for national execution.

204. One delegation also requested additional information on the status of the Programme and Projects Manual, the work measurement exercises, the review of funds mandates, and the strategy and business plan of the United Nations Development Fund for Women. That delegation expressed concern at the level of unliquidated obligations as well as the size of the write-off of non-expendable property. That delegation also expressed concern that four trust funds had surplus expenditures, in other words, expenditure exceeded income. Most significant were the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) and the Office to Combat Desertification and Drought (UNSO). The other two trust funds were UNIFEM and the United Nations Fund for Science and Technology for Development (UNFSTD).

205. The need for internal audit functions to be properly and adequately staffed was emphasized. The recommendation to eliminate non-audit functions from the work of the Division for Audit and Management Review (DAMR) was supported. One delegation emphasized the need for enhanced audit coverage and focus. One delegation was encouraged that DAMR now had a five-year plan but remained concerned about improving the quality of the audits, audit documentation and audit reports.

206. One speaker questioned the impact of receiving repeated recommendations by the Board of Auditors. Another supported more frequent discussions of the reports of the Board of Auditors. One delegation noted that the Board of Auditors report highlighted the need to improve oversight, accountability and management in general in addition to the internal audit function. After all, audits and investigations were the last defense in internal controls and oversight. Proper systems and management were key to adequate stewardship of resources. Timely and adequate follow-up to and implementation of findings and recommendations was also important.

207. The Director of External Audit, United Kingdom, stated that recommendations that had not been implemented were repeated in subsequent reports of the Board of Auditors. He noted that ACABQ had requested the Board of Auditors to draw out areas where further action was required.

208. The Assistant Administrator underlined the rapid rise in national execution and reiterated that the issue would be examined in depth at the second regular session 1997. He noted that DAMR had not been subject to staff reductions during the current biennium and its needs would be closely examined in the development of the budget strategy for 1998-1999. He also noted that it would be feasible to discuss reports of the Board of Auditors at the first regular session each year. With regard to the elimination of non-audit functions in DAMR, the Assistant Administrator indicated that the transfer of such functions to the Division of Operational Policies and Procedures in the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support would be completed by February 1997.

209. The Executive Board approved the following decision:

97/3. UNDP: Audit reports

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the comments made by the United Nations Development Programme in document DP/1997/3 in response to the recommendations made in the report of the United Nations Board of Auditors for the biennium 1994-1995 (A/51/5/Add.1);

2. Requests the secretariat to provide the Executive Board, at its first regular session 1998, with an updated overview of the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors and an updated timetable indicating the dates when follow-up action will have been completed in the areas that need to be addressed, namely, audit of projects, reserve for field accommodations, national execution, budgetary matters, management of funds, such as the United Nations Capital Development Fund and the United Nations Development Fund for Women, and internal audit;

3. Requests the secretariat to provide an update on the progress achieved in the implementation of the recommendations of the auditors at the first regular session of the Executive Board each year, as a matter of routine, under the agenda item "Financial, budgetary and administrative matters".

16 January 1997

Implementation of decision 96/40 on management, accountability and the Reserve for Field Accommodation

210. The Administrator reported to the Executive Board, as requested at the third regular session 1996, on issues relating to the Reserve for Field Accommodation (RFA). His statement complemented the information provided in a conference room paper (DP/1997/CRP.3), which included the status of activity

through 10 January 1997. He informed the Board that a significant level of effort had been made towards completing the investigation of matters relating to the Reserve and towards initiating management accountability measures. An investigation was nearing completion, and UNDP had made progress in terms of identification of what had happened and who in UNDP was responsible. The need for due process for UNDP staff prevented the disclosure of detailed information on the mismanagement or misconduct of staff at the present time. Summaries of the reports on internal accountability and on the external investigation would be made available to the Board. The investigation was confirming that there had been serious breakdowns in internal controls and management oversight, which had resulted in UNDP not obtaining value for money in the construction of housing and common premises. The Administrator pledged his commitment to determine the costs to UNDP and seek recovery, wherever possible. UNDP would not, however, be in a position to make the determination for some time.

211. The Administrator noted that 18 present and former staff members, including several senior managers, were under review and could be considered for accountability and/or disciplinary measures. Two of those staff members had been suspended pending charges that carried with them the possibility of maximum sanctions should the allegations be confirmed in the disciplinary process. Financial recovery could also be considered. The remaining cases would be brought to the next stage in the coming weeks. The Administrator expressed his full personal commitment to bringing all matters to a timely and complete resolution. He highlighted his decision to assign the management of the Reserve activities on a temporary basis to the Deputy Director of the Division for Administrative and Information Services. He noted that UNDP was moving forward with the disposal of housing that was no longer needed. With regard to internal controls, he reported that the transactions relating to the Reserve were being made in a tighter framework of checks and balances. A new policy and control unit within the Division of Finance was being established. UNDP had kept the members of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy (JCGP) and the Under-Secretary-General of the Office of Internal Oversight Services informed of developments regarding the Reserve. He assured the Executive Board that all actions would be pursued to completion.

212. Several delegations took the floor to thank the Administrator for his remarks and for the action UNDP was taking with regard to the situation. In particular, the personal pledges and commitments expressed by the Administrator to taking action with regard to the Reserve were greatly appreciated. Some delegations also expressed their appreciation to the Assistant Administrator and Director, BFA. The need to take swift action and to keep the Executive Board informed of all developments was underlined. One delegation asked how long new common premises projects would be put on hold.

213. One delegation was concerned that too much time had elapsed before UNDP had addressed the root causes of the problem. In its view, if the situation was to be rectified, several important steps needed to be taken. Those steps included the need to have comprehensive measures in place and understood by all relevant staff members and other personnel to prevent any overpayments from occurring in the future. That meant that before any funds were disbursed, all necessary and appropriate expenditures relating to housing and common premises must be verified. In the case of JCGP partners, more formal arrangements must exist to

ensure adequate involvement in the planning and monitoring of engineering requirements. With regard to financial accounting procedures, the approach of UNDP to segregate assets relating to housing from those relating to common premises was commendable. Written procedures needed to be in place to delineate clearly recurring maintenance expenses from rehabilitation costs, an element that would enhance the clarity and transparency of UNDP financial statements. UNDP must also retain individuals with the relevant expertise in managing properties, offer training, as appropriate, and make available the necessary resources. The decision not to construct or purchase housing premises was endorsed. It was regretted that UNDP was unlikely to recover fully its initial investment. The delegation looked forward to reviewing at the second regular session the results of the investigation undertaken by DAMR. The report should include actions taken to address systemic problems relating to the Reserve. It was also hoped that the Board of Auditors would continue to monitor the situation, and if necessary, issue an interim report. The delegation indicated that it might request the engagement of others in reviewing and commenting on the adequacy of remedial actions taken by UNDP.

214. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Finance and Administration emphasized the great importance that UNDP attached to this matter, including the need for external and internal actions undertaken. UNDP was examining all the issues, including systemic factors, certifying and approval functions, establishment of budgets and obligations, and accountability. Recurrence of a similar situation would be avoided. He noted that the JCGP members had been briefed in detail and explained that future agreements on common premises would have to be clear to all parties. A professional capacity to manage joint projects was needed. Construction of new premises would be a last resort.

215. The Director, DAMR, informed the Executive Board that work was being undertaken to gather as much information as possible as swiftly as possible.

216. The President noted the appreciation of the Bureau of the Executive Board for the actions undertaken and determination of UNDP to correct the situation.

217. The Executive Board took note of the information presented in the Administrator's oral report and in the conference room paper (DP/1997/CRP.3).

Progress report on the implementation of an accountability framework

218. The Associate Administrator gave an oral progress report on the implementation of an accountability framework, as requested at the third regular session 1996. He explained that much of the work on the accountability framework was being undertaken within the change management process. The key components of the framework were establishment and communication of mandate, mission and goals; shared values; competencies; and a system for monitoring and learning. Overlaying the key components would be a control and risk self-assessment model focusing on operational objectives, related policies and acceptable risks. The approach would reduce reliance upon manuals, directives and instructions. Two priority considerations were governance issues in relation to the Executive Board, and the accountability performance contracts between the Administrator and senior managers, for which there would be

training. Clear operational objectives and goals for UNDP would be communicated. UNDP had developed a draft statement of values and guiding principles based on a global survey of all staff in 1996. The statement, to be communicated throughout UNDP in the early part of 1997, would form the cornerstone of an ethics programme that would include a code of ethics and an infrastructure to support staff action and provide rewards and sanctions based on ethical conduct.

219. Other elements of the framework included the development of resident coordinator competencies and performance appraisal criteria and the refinement of standard competency definitions for all staff functions. An executive information management system prototype had been developed and the new Financial Information Management system was being implemented in early 1997. Two initiatives had been taken with regard to monitoring and learning, including the Management Review/Oversight Committee and the strengthening and decentralization of the Division for Audit and Management Review (DAMR). The change management projects would be reviewing and implementing the recommendations of the final report from consultants, who had reviewed subsystems in UNDP that had an impact on accountability.

220. Information was sought on the proposals regarding ethics, on how headquarters activities would be audited with the decentralization of DAMR and on how situations such as that relating to the Reserve for Field Accommodation could be avoided. One delegation emphasized the need for clear rules to guide staff. One delegation noted that in terms of the RFA, it seemed that the system was not endorsed, did not work or was unclear. The system must be clear on what was expected of each function and person so that one could measure progress in achieving the desired results.

221. The Associate Administrator said that ethical questions would be examined in the context of the overall accountability framework. Its aim was to provide a higher system of values, one developed in collaboration with staff members. He noted that DAMR would not be completely decentralized. Some resources would be placed in regional centres to enhance their oversight capability. With regard to the RFA, the rules had been clear, but had not been followed, and there had been no alarm system in place to warn of the problem. The proposed financial control unit would create an early warning system. DAMR would move more to oversight and management reviews, with the aim of bringing out weaknesses in control systems at an earlier stage.

222. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Finance and Administration noted the lack of checks and balances in the RFA situation.

223. The Director, DAMR, stated that the approach would focus on control and risk assessment. The four planned regional service centres would be more cost-effective and closer to the resources to be delivered. The Director, DAMR, stated that DAMR would conduct more audits of headquarters units (as recommended by the Board of Auditors).

224. The Executive Board took note of the oral progress report on the implementation of an accountability framework.

Cost segments at UNDP headquarters

225. The Assistant Administrator and Director, BFA, informed the Executive Board that additional information on cost segments at UNDP headquarters, requested at the third regular session 1996, was contained in a conference room paper (DP/1997/CRP.4).

226. Questions were raised about the information contained in the paper, including about the number of total staff costs and how the cost of rent at headquarters in New York would compare with rental costs in other cities having a United Nations presence. One delegation suggested that the staff of UNDP could be further decentralized to other locations, and looked forward to more information in connection with the change management process. Further information on headquarters costs could be included in the annual information on the budget. The information provided would allow for enhanced oversight of administrative costs, including headquarters costs. Some concern was expressed over the trend of increased expenditures and UNDP was encouraged to reduce costs in the context of the next budget biennium. One delegation, noting the increased costs in remuneration despite decreased numbers of core staff, requested an outline with information from 1990 on the number of staff, both at headquarters and in country offices, including those with different types of contracts. It was noted that with decreasing core contributions, UNDP should continue further downsizing of staff at headquarters. Another delegation underlined the need for structures in recipient countries to be strengthened despite reduced overall expenditure. It was suggested that a comprehensive discussion on headquarters costs take place at the annual session. One delegation emphasized that the revised budget estimates for the 1998-1999 biennium should allow better oversight by the Executive Board of administrative costs, including headquarters costs. That delegation also expressed concern that headquarters administrative costs had increased significantly between the 1990-1991 biennium and the 1992-1993 biennium and had not subsequently declined. That delegation expressed appreciation for this trend data and looked forward to further progress in minimizing administrative expenses not just at Headquarters but throughout UNDP.

227. With regard to location of UNDP headquarters, one delegation preferred that it remain in New York. Another delegation referred to the availability of Bonn as a location for UNDP headquarters.

228. One delegation encouraged the Executive Board not to continue to request information already available in annual financial documents.

229. The Assistant Administrator noted that the information on cost segments would be included in the documentation for the discussion of the biennial budget. Related questions, including those on decentralization, would also be taken up in the context of the change management process.

230. The Director, Budget Division, noted that if the two components of core and non-core were taken together, the staff reduction would be 25 per cent. With regard to rental costs, the information provided reflected existing rental agreements which were being re-negotiated. UNDP expected a substantial reduction in rent, to below the level of 1990-1991, in the next biennium. He

also noted that there was a provision in the biennial budget under common staff costs for reimbursement of income taxes. Total salary costs had remained more or less the same over the past six years, while unit costs had increased. Other factors included inflation, training programmes, and the costs of separation packages. Information on trends would be included in the context of the overall biennial budget.

231. The President noted that the issue would have to be examined more thoroughly, particularly in light of the fact that some countries were offering rent-free premises. The limited resources available to UNDP should be used at the country level.

232. The Executive Board took note of the information provided.

VIII. UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR WOMEN

233. The Associate Administrator introduced the item, stating that the advice and guidance of the Executive Board was sought on three issues relating to the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM): the partial funding modality; the external evaluation of UNIFEM; and the Fund's strategy and business plan. He informed the Board that the resource situation of UNIFEM was stable, with an increase in its overall income level. The pledging conference held in November 1996 had resulted in $6.4 million in pledges from 28 donors, an increase of $.674 million over 1996 pledges. In order to make the best use of the money as it was received, UNIFEM would need to revert to a partial funding modality, so that multi-year programmes and projects could be planned and approved in their entirety. The proposed methodology for partial funding was explained in a conference room paper (DP/1997/CRP.5) before the Board. An informal note providing the response of UNIFEM to the recommendations contained in the external evaluation of the Fund was also made available to the Board. The business plan of UNIFEM would be useful as a guide to the Fund's work over the following three years. He also informed the Board that, pursuant to the discussions at the informal sessions of the Board in December 1996, UNIFEM had obtained an opinion from the Office of Legal Affairs to the effect that it had authority within its existing mandates to work in the countries of Eastern and Central Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States.

234. The UNIFEM Director addressed the Executive Board on the issues before the Board relating to UNIFEM. She underlined the close collaboration with the UNDP Division of Finance in developing a proposed modality for the partial funding system in UNIFEM. The Fund had been able to respond to several of the recommendations in the external evaluation report, especially those relating to programme focus and management. She outlined the elements of the UNIFEM business plan, which would include the UNIFEM mission, the nature of UNIFEM business, new opportunities and challenges in the external environment, strengths and needs in the UNIFEM internal environment, and management for results, including strategic programming, resource utilization, and requirements. The Director emphasized that UNIFEM served as an important entity in the United Nations for a very crucial constituency. The Fund had to be effectively managed with adequate resources in order to fulfil its mandate of economic and political empowerment of women and direct its resources to the

needs and concerns of women. The Fund would direct its resources to bring about systemic change that would lead to that empowerment, pilot new approaches that could be replicated on a wider scale, test new policy options for gender equality, and provide empirical grounding for policy development.

235. Several speakers, including one on behalf of the African Group, and another on behalf of the Asian Group, and supported by one other delegation, praised the work of UNIFEM in helping women in developing countries. The Fund should be in a position to continue its activities and to follow up the Platform of Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women. UNIFEM had been sufficiently scrutinized and had demonstrated that it maintained a close relationship with the Executive Board.

236. Many delegations supported the approval of the partial funding system. However, some speakers would have preferred to have a full discussion on the follow-up to the recommendations of the evaluation of UNIFEM before having to decide whether to approve partial funding. One delegation requested information comparing the operational reserve levels between the former and the proposed systems. A discussion of the follow-up to the evaluation was requested at the second regular session 1997. One delegation stated that new projects should be implemented in accordance with the business plan.

237. The UNIFEM Director explained that approval of the partial funding modality would be of great benefit to the ability of UNIFEM to programme its resources. She noted that UNIFEM was pleased to work with the Executive Board in common ownership of the Fund's activities. Resources would be used for catalytic work for the good of women. A comprehensive business plan and strategy for UNIFEM would be presented to the annual session 1997.

238. The Deputy Director of UNIFEM noted that UNIFEM would be able to fund new activities under the partial funding modality. The Director, DOF, said the arrangement was conservative and practical and that risk management had been considered.

239. Several delegations underlined the need for UNIFEM to work in areas of its comparative advantage, citing in particular its work as a catalyst for other United Nations organizations to promote gender mainstreaming and its advocacy for the political and economic empowerment of women. One delegation underlined the severe implications of the feminization of poverty and the need for women to have access to food. In that regard, UNIFEM should have an active role in follow-up to the World Food Summit.

240. Wide support was expressed for the Fund's extending its work to Eastern and Central Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States. One speaker, on behalf of the Central Asian States, hoped that UNIFEM would initiate activities in poverty eradication to benefit women in that region. Another speaker stated that UNIFEM should take measures to help women who had refugee status.

241. The Executive Board approved the following decision:

97/4. United Nations Development Fund for Women

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the conference room paper on the applicability of a partial funding system to the United Nations Development Fund for Women (DP/1997/CRP.5), submitted in response to Executive Board decision 96/43;

2. Endorses the methodology for determining project approval and operational reserve levels for the United Nations Development Fund for Women under the partial funding modality, as set out in the annex to the present decision, and approves, on a provisional basis, its use for the Fund, beginning in 1997, and its continuation on a no-objection basis, pending the discussion of the response to the evaluation of the Fund;

3. Decides that an appropriate monitoring mechanism should be established by the United Nations Development Fund for Women in consultation with the United Nations Development Programme and that the Fund should report on the functioning of the partial funding modality in the annual financial report of the United Nations Development Programme and its administered funds, to be presented during each third regular session;

4. Takes note of the response provided by the United Nations Development Fund for Women to the recommendations of the Fund's external evaluation, as reflected in the informal note provided by the Fund during the current session and decides that the paper should be distributed in the working languages of the Executive Board for discussion at the second regular session 1997, bearing in mind paragraph 3 of Board decision 96/8 regarding the rules for the submission of documentation;

5. Also takes note of the progress being made by the United Nations Development Fund for Women in developing a strategy and business plan, as reflected in the oral report of the Executive Director to the Board;

6. Takes further note of the recent finding that the United Nations Development Fund for Women may work in Eastern Europe, Central Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, within the existing legislation, and requests the Fund to take into consideration the finding in the context of its business plan and strategy to be presented to the annual session 1997 of the Board, bearing in mind that due consideration should be given to activities in the least developed countries and low-income countries, particularly in Africa, as expressed in Executive Board decision 96/43.

17 January 1997

Annex

PROPOSED PARTIAL FUNDING SYSTEM FOR UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR WOMEN

The following variables would be used in the formulae to determine programme approval and operational reserve levels:

(a) Estimated income to general resources, calculated on the basis of the pledging conference results and direct consultation with donors (I);

(b) Balance of general resources carried over from the previous year (B);

(c) Administrative budget. The estimate of the next three years will be by default equal to three times the current year. UNIFEM management will submit any adjustments from that estimate to UNDP for approval (AB);

(d) Budgets of ongoing projects rephased from previous years into the present year, plus budgets of ongoing projects for the year in question (OPB);

(e) Delivery rate, i.e., estimated proportion of current year approved budgets actually disbursed during the year (D).

1. The maximum approval level (AL) for programming over a three-year period will be set in December of each year, using a conservative estimate of income realization for the next three years, minus administrative costs for that same period. A very conservative estimate of income to be realized for the first year would be equal to the estimated income for that year, calculated on the basis of the pledging conference results and direct consultation with donors. The estimate for the second year would be equal to 50 per cent of the estimated income of the first year while the estimate for the third year would be equal to 25 per cent of the estimated income of the first year (i.e., 50 per cent of the estimate for the previous year).

$$AL = (1+0.5+0.25) \times I-AB$$

If the income stream were to become more diverse and hence less dependent on a small group of donors, the amount of resources in future years that could be programmed could be increased from the present coefficients for the second and third years. The present levels represent a very conservative approach, consistent with the existing characteristics of the donor base. As conditions change, UNIFEM management, in consultation with Division of Finance, might reconsider the income estimates to be used, and present them to the Executive Board for consideration.

2. The amount available for total new approvals over the programme period is obtained by subtracting the total value of the budgets of ongoing projects for present and future years from the maximum approval level. The operational reserve (OR) would be set at the annual average expenditure over the programming

period, i.e., one third of the maximum programme approval level times the estimated delivery rate.

$$OR = AL/3 \times D$$

3. The programme expenditure ceiling (EC) for the current year would be set so as not to exceed the total estimated resources available for that year (balance of general resources brought forward from the previous year plus estimated income), minus administrative costs. As the operational reserve level will fluctuate with changes in the approval levels, any additions or reductions to the reserve must also be taken into account in determining the programme expenditure ceiling. This ceiling would therefore be calculated as:

$$EC = B + I - AB +/- \text{Changes to the OR}$$

The annual ceiling for new project budgets approvals (AC) in the present year is set on the basis of this expenditure ceiling by:

(a) Subtracting the budgets of ongoing projects for the current year, including amounts rephased from the previous year (OPB); and

(b) Taking into account the estimated delivery rate of UNIFEM (80 per cent) and consequently adjusting the project budget approval ceiling upwards to allow as much programming as possible, without exceeding available resources.

$$AC = (1/D \times EC) - OPB$$

4. The UNIFEM operational reserve will serve two main purposes: (a) to cover any short-term shortfalls between expenditures and liquidity from month to month and (b) to provide a hedge against downward income fluctuations from year to year. UNIFEM will monitor the operational reserve and report on it quarterly to the Office of the Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Finance and Administration. If it appears that the level of the reserve cannot be maintained at the close of the year, the Administrator will inform the Executive Board, stating the reasons justifying the use of the reserve and the steps that UNIFEM intends to take to address the problem. The functioning of the partial funding system, including the operational reserve level, will be the subject of a management review by UNIFEM and DOF every December. The appropriate levels for the coming years will be determined at that time.

IX. OTHER MATTERS

Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolution 95/56

242. The Director of the Emergency Response Division (ERD), Office of United Nations System Support and Services (OUNS), introduced the conference room paper on action taken by UNDP in follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolution 95/56 (DP/1997/CRP.6). He informed the Executive Board that UNDP had been working closely with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), the Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ), and the

Department for Humanitarian Affairs (DHA) in preparing the report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up to resolution 96/56. The ERD had been working both on the strengthening of coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance and the contribution of UNDP target for resource assignment from the core (TRAC) line 1.1.3 under the successor programming arrangements. He underlined the commitment of UNDP to the role of DHA as coordinator of humanitarian relief in the United Nations system, and noted that UNDP had financed most of the DHA humanitarian coordinators, as they were in most cases also resident coordinators. The work of UNDP in development and its support to the resident coordinator function were highly relevant in the context of humanitarian activities. The resident and humanitarian coordinator functions were critical to the bridging of relief and development activities.

243. The Director then described the elements of the special development challenges facing UNDP in addressing the three major issues that existed in most crisis contexts: displaced persons, de-mining and demobilization. He noted that under TRAC line 1.1.3, 19 special development initiatives were under way and another 15 were near finalization. Many were essential bridging projects, which helped to bring together relief and development, and catalytic in that they helped to plan for and attract resources. The strategic framework into which the projects would be included required leadership from both the resident coordinator and the humanitarian coordinator, enabling all partners, both national and international, to have a frame of reference for their respective actions. The contributions from TRAC 1.1.3 for developing strategic frameworks were therefore devoted to fostering the collaborative responses of the United Nations system and its partners. Within those frameworks, better bridging of relief and development could be facilitated through expanded consolidated appeals, which UNDP and DHA had jointly proposed for review by IASC and other inter-agency bodies. In September 1996, CCPOQ had endorsed a plan for the United Nations system's activities in post-conflict recovery, which was consistent with TRAC 1.1.3 support for development of strategic frameworks. Together with DHA, UNDP was organizing a meeting of resident coordinators and humanitarian coordinators from countries in special circumstances in March 1997 in order to strengthen United Nations system coordination and evaluate lessons learned.

244. In an initial exchange of views following the presentation of the conference room paper, several delegations commented that the paper could have elaborated better the different roles of UNDP and DHA in crisis situations and clarified the role and responsibilities of UNDP in particular. The paper should have set out a clear, well-defined strategy for UNDP in emergency situations. More information on the sharing of responsibilities during a crisis was sought, in particular with regard to uprooted populations. It was pointed out that the respective roles of other United Nations agencies were not cited in the paper. Several delegations requested examples of cases of cooperation among the respective organizations and information on how UNDP served in a coordinating role at the country level. One delegation requested inclusion of references to activities in institutional capacity-building and in post-conflict situations.

245. The Director, ERD, noted that IACM would review the expanded Inter-Agency Consolidated Appeals Process in January 1997. Support from TRAC line 1.1.3 had been in operation from the beginning of 1997, with programming beginning in

1996. The pipeline projects had supported elections and de-mining, among other activities. UNDP was working with many partners, including the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Food Programme and NGOs. He drew the attention of the Executive Board to the UNDP booklet "Building Bridges Between Relief and Development".

246. At the resumed discussion of the item, the Associate Administrator expressed regret that UNDP had not consulted enough with the Executive Board prior to the discussion of the item. A consultative process could have helped to avoid the misunderstandings that had arisen and could have helped to highlight the role of UNDP in emergencies. While the paper had not explained it thoroughly enough, he underlined the important relationships UNDP had in working with other organizations, including in the past in such operations as the Cambodia Resettlement and Reintegration Programme (CARERE) and through area development schemes in Sudan, in which internally displaced persons were resettled. In Rwanda, funding from TRAC line 1.1.3 was being utilized for the development of a strategic inter-agency framework with development partners in that country. There were many examples of similar activities where UNDP had collaborated with its partners in IASC.

247. The Director, ERD, noted that in the paper UNDP had not wished to appear to define the role of other organizations or to encroach on DHA responsibilities in preparing the report to the Economic and Social Council. He anticipated receiving a timetable from DHA for the reporting process. The conference room paper had underlined the need for all actors to strengthen coordination. The resident coordinator system, supported by UNDP, took the lead responsibility, with the resident coordinator normally serving as the humanitarian coordinator. He noted that the strategic framework concept was beginning to find momentum. With regard to resource mobilization, the expanded Consolidated Appeals Process, agreed to by both the Under-Secretary-General of DHA and the Administrator, would enhance the resource mobilization process. With regard to training, UNDP was a pioneer in the disaster management training programme for resident coordinators, now supported through TRAC line 1.1.3. Secondment programmes were useful in training staff of different organizations. With regard to specific cooperation with other United Nations organizations, he noted that UNDP had worked closely with the World Bank in Liberia and Rwanda in post-conflict situations, and was in the final stages of concluding a memorandum of understanding with UNHCR.

248. One delegation, also on behalf of another, thanked the Associate Administrator for the examples of cooperation in post-conflict situations, and the Director, ERD, for his response to the questions posed by delegations at the earlier meeting. He underlined that the conference room paper could have demonstrated that UNDP was taking greater initiatives in responding to Economic and Social Council resolution 95/56, and could also have elaborated proposals to improve coordination on humanitarian assistance. He noted that the Executive Board was aware of the sensitivities regarding the roles of different entities. The delegation, supported by other speakers, requested that a revised conference room paper be presented at the second regular session 1997.

249. One delegation, on behalf of the African group, cited the key role of UNDP in post-conflict situations, especially in Africa, including the Great Lakes region, and in the aftermath of natural disasters. The group would welcome the strengthening of the coordination function, especially with regard to rehabilitation.

250. One delegation, also on behalf of another, stated that it would have been useful if the information provided orally had been included in the written material. While the paper addressed some of the issues regarding humanitarian operations, it lacked a clear and well-defined strategy and did not explain adequately the capacities of UNDP. More information on the role of UNDP regarding displaced persons was sought. More concrete examples from the field and more analysis regarding coordination were needed. The role of government counterparts and the level of delegation between headquarters and the field needed to be clearly spelled out. The United Nations system should have a single strategy in each country. Another delegation emphasized the timeliness of the discussions on the strengthening of humanitarian assistance within the United Nations system. The efforts to improve the division of labour among the organizations was welcomed. The delegation stated that the UNDP presence in countries in post-conflict situations was useful, as were its relations with civil society. While UNDP lacked the resources for involvement in physical activities, it could work with administrative infrastructures and rehabilitation of legal systems, including through links with the World Bank. Aspects of the continuum should be taken into account at an early stage. Joint evaluations would be welcomed.

251. The Director, ERD, responded that UNDP had a bifurcate role: narrow interventions in humanitarian situations and a custodial role in managing the resident coordinator system. He pointed out that often the resident representative, as humanitarian coordinator, had reporting lines to several people within the United Nations system. He noted that de-mining, demobilization and working with displaced persons were activities with both a relief phase and a development phase. He agreed that a revised paper would be presented to the Executive Board at its second regular session.

252. The Chief of the Office of the Under-Secretary-General, Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA), addressed the Executive Board and noted that an informal paper had been circulated on follow-up to Economic and Social Council decision 95/56 within IASC. He gave a short briefing on the issues of coordination, resource mobilization and the linkages between relief and development. He underlined the support of DHA for strengthening the resident coordinator system, which needed to be reinforced in order to enable the fulfilment of DHA functions. The Department had the responsibility for sectoral coordination as well as designating organizations for common services within IASC, with work in the Great Lakes region a recent example. Availability of resources under UNDP TRAC line 1.1.3 was welcomed, including as funding for transitional interventions. The sub-group on resource mobilization had made progress, including with regard to the Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP). He noted that the IASC sub-working group would also soon be considering the UNDP-DHA proposal for an "expanded CAP", which addressed the requirements of the transitional phase where both relief and recovery activities were crucial. DHA was firmly committed to promoting an inter-agency agreement on such a mechanism.

Relief should be delivered in the context of long-term recovery, or relief with development, as opposed to relief to development. That represented a shift in the paradigm and agreement on three principles: that the objectives process of recovery should start during the emergency, not at the end; that the objectives included in the response to the emergency begin to lay the foundation to recovery; and that recovery should be based on the needs of people in the community concerned. It was expected that the review by the Economic and Social Council would be rewarding and lead to a positive culture of cooperation. He noted that the IASC sub-working group would also soon be considering the UNDP-DHA proposal for the expanded CAP, addressing the requirements of the transitional phase, where both relief and recovery activities were crucial.

253. One delegation asked that the Geneva office of UNDP be strengthened in the area and that the United Nations Office of Project Services open an office in Geneva. Several delegations looked forward to discussion of the paper in a broader context at the Economic and Social Council. One speaker noted that the approach of UNDP seemed too ambitious, with proposals that could go beyond resolution 95/56. Another underlined the comparative advantage of UNDP through its presence in programme countries, and its ability to address the development dimension at all stages. That delegation questioned whether it would be feasible to provide relief with development.

254. With regard to what was expected in the revised paper for the second regular session, one delegation suggested that in addition to the comments made by delegations at the present session, UNDP should keep in mind the annex to Economic and Social Council resolution 95/56, which listed issues set out for consideration by Executive Boards, including operational responsibilities, gaps, financial and operational capacities, strategies, staff development, reporting on and evaluation of programmes, and resources. It would be useful to link the work of the IASC subsidiary working groups and the overall thinking within the system. Another delegation emphasized the need to focus on the role of UNDP within the United Nations system as a whole as well as its relationship with DHA. UNDP was a valuable tool in humanitarian assistance within the operational activities area and could play a more strategic role in prevention. One speaker encouraged UNDP to begin the informal consultation process on the revised conference room paper as early as possible.

255. The Director, ERD, confirmed that the comments made by delegations would be reflected in the revised conference room paper and that informal consultations would be set up to help to prevent future misunderstandings. He underlined the growing spirit of collaboration in evidence during the previous year.

256. The Executive Board requested the Administrator to submit, at its second regular session 1997, a revised conference room paper on follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolution 95/56, taking into consideration comments made during the debate at the present session.

Cyprus country office

257. The Executive Board had before it a note on the Cyprus country office (DP/1997/5).

258. The representative of Cyprus noted the status of his country as a net contributor country (NCC) and the intent of UNDP to close the UNDP office in Cyprus in March 1997. He expressed gratitude to UNDP, the Administrator, the Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, and the resident representatives who had served in Cyprus for their valuable contribution to the work of UNDP in cooperation with the Government of Cyprus. He hoped that under its new status Cyprus would be a contributor to UNDP.

259. The Executive Board took note of the information regarding the closure of the country office in Cyprus, as contained in document DP/1997/5.

Programme delivery

260. At the request of delegations during the present session, the Associate Administrator briefed the Executive Board on the status of programme delivery. He noted that 1997 was the first year of the successor programming period, and therefore the critical transitionary year during which UNDP was expected to implement fully the new arrangements, as approved by the Board in decision 95/23. Not only did UNDP need to deliver high quality programmes but it should deliver them in a timely manner within the prescribed resource package.

261. In October 1995, the Administrator had expressed his alarm at the build-up in the level of liquid core resources, and the apparent slowdown of approved programmes and planned pipeline in place for 1996 and future years. An increase in programming momentum was called for in order to reduce the build-up of liquid core resources, to ensure the full delivery of fifth cycle funds, and to establish the foundation upon which the resource base approved in Executive Board decision 95/23, covering the new programming period, 1997-1999, would be delivered. A conference room paper (DP/1996/CRP.19) on the subject had been made available to the third regular session 1996. A number of measures had been taken at that time to improve the future outlook of the programme. The Administrator directly communicated to all resident representatives his deep concern about losing programming momentum and the corresponding drop in delivery inherent therein. At the request of the Administrator, he had initiated a series of special reviews with the regional bureaux to develop comprehensive plans of action outlining region-specific strategies for dealing with the issues, and to analyse individual country programming levels, with particular emphasis on underprogrammed countries. Sixteen large, underprogrammed countries had been subsequently identified. He had spent six weeks in one of those countries, Bangladesh, as Resident Representative, a.i., in order to gain a better understanding of the problems, and ways of overcoming them. He described to the Board several of his experiences which related to programme delivery in Bangladesh.

262. As a result of a number of internal analyses and of his own professional experience, it became rapidly apparent that the continuing programming and delivery slowdown was the direct result of a combination of complex and interrelated factors reflecting UNDP efforts to reposition itself as a more responsive and effective organization. Chief among those factors were the significant increase in national execution/implementation, the implementation of the programme approach, and the refocusing of UNDP programming priorities and

structure. As UNDP left its traditional programming arrangements, the resulting programme reorientations and adaptations to new guidelines had created slowdowns in the normal rates for programme build-up and delivery.

263. The organization had focused its priorities on strengthening operational policies and procedures, and improving the current programme delivery situation, in parallel with the current deliberations and activities connected with the internal change process of UNDP. In October 1996, he had established the Special Task Force on Programming and Delivery for the purpose of monitoring programme approvals and delivery in country offices based on individual programme country 1997-1999 expenditure targets. Those targets had been arrived at through a consultative process that included resident representatives, regional bureaux, and the Division for Resources Planning and Coordination. The terms of reference for the Special Task Force were distributed to the Executive Board. The Administrator had also committed $2 million from his contingency reserve for funding a special support project whose sole purpose was to have direct and immediate impact on increasing 1997-1999 programme quality, commitments and delivery, with special emphasis on 1997 delivery.

264. The Executive Committee of UNDP was regularly apprised of the ongoing problems and issues impacting programme delivery. The situation was serious. The 1997 budget approval target was $878 million. At the present time, UNDP had about $260 million in approvals. Thus, if UNDP assumed that significant delivery in 1997 would take place only against budgets approved prior to July 1997, the monthly approval rate during the next six months should approximate $100 million.

265. At the Executive Committee meeting held the preceding week, the Administrator declared programme delivery as the number one priority for UNDP in 1997. He then highlighted the directives the Administrator had put into immediate effect: (a) all programme staff would devote maximum attention to boosting approval and delivery rates to meet the targets that were collectively set; (b) restrictions on all travel by the Directors of the regional bureaux and resident representatives were in effect for the following six months; (c) the Executive Committee would continue to monitor delivery performance on a regular basis; (d) the Special Task Force on Programming and Delivery, which met every two weeks under his chairmanship, was designated as the primary instrument for generating the necessary impetus for accelerating approvals and implementation rates; (e) issuance of maximum delegation of approval authority to country offices, which in turn would be held fully accountable for delivery performance; (f) the completion of all programme manuals and guidelines supporting the full implementation of the successor programming arrangements, including revised national execution and programme approach manuals, and guidelines for working with NGOs; (g) transmission of a "Direct Line" from the Administrator to all resident representatives on the issue of approvals and delivery, as well as a special letter from him to resident representatives in designated "priority countries", defining clearly what was expected of them and the support to be provided by headquarters; (h) insurance that TRAC lines 1.1.1 and 1.1.2 were jointly programmed in line with existing criteria; (i) preparation of a short list of countries in each region based upon the size of their notional TRACs for immediate and concerted attention. The list would include countries that could realistically make a critical difference to region-wide performance; and (j) the

creation of delivery action teams by regional bureaux, to be composed of some of the best and most operational staff. The teams would be sent to priority countries to assist resident representatives in critically reviewing and tightening delivery projection, accelerating the approval of projects, and developing programme-specific, innovative solutions for boosting actual delivery in 1997. The $2 million Delivery Support Facility would provide the resources for fielding those teams.

266. The Associate Administrator assured the Executive Board that UNDP fully understood the gravity of the present programme delivery situation, particularly in the current environment of change. The organization was directing its full energy to ensuring that approvals, especially for 1997, reached acceptable levels over the following six to eight months in order to attain satisfactory delivery levels. The results of UNDP efforts and the potential impact they would have on 1997 and 1998 delivery levels would be known by mid-year. He proposed that a comprehensive report on the 1997-1999 programme delivery situation be submitted for the consideration of the third regular session 1997.

267. The President requested information on the relationship between the Special Task Force on Programming and Delivery and the Task Force on National Execution. The Associate Administrator stated that the two efforts differed in that the Task Force on National Execution was aimed at finalizing guidelines for the manual on national execution, which would be reviewed by the Programme Management Oversight Committee. Both task forces would report eventually to the Executive Committee, the highest policy-making committee in UNDP.

268. Several delegations thanked the Associate Administrator for his excellent account, in particular with reference to his personal experience in Bangladesh. Many speakers noted the reasons for the difficulties in the delivery processes and complimented UNDP on the range of interventions to be utilized to increase delivery. There was great interest in the issue in the capitals and particularly among the treasury and finance ministries owing to the possible effect of the situation on future funding of UNDP. The work of the Special Task Force was very reassuring to delegations. One delegation sought clarification on the expenditure target for 1997. Information was also sought on whether the special measures, including the plan for deputy resident representatives to work outside of their normal assignments, would interfere with normal planning procedures and on the involvement of Governments in the process. One representative expressed concern that delivery might not be so easy to implement, in particular at the time of the change process in UNDP. The delegation requested information on the delivery rates in 1995 and 1996. Internal bureaucracy in UNDP needed to be more streamlined to create a better organizational image.

269. The Associate Administrator informed the Executive Board that the expenditure target for 1997 was $635 million. Individual targets had been worked out in conjunction with the regional bureaux, so that they would be as realistic as possible. The performance of resident representatives would be assessed on the realization of targets worked out for 1997. He noted that the figure for 1996 was not yet available. The delivery rate in 1992 was $696 million; for 1993, $573 million; for 1994, $460 million; and for 1995 $416 million. The decision to dispatch delivery action teams was a short-term

emergency measure for countries that might not have sufficient staff to work on programme delivery. The programming process would be coordinated with the Government.

97/6. Overview of decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its first regular session 1997

The Executive Board

Recalls that during the first regular session 1997 it:

Item 1: ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Elected the following Bureau for 1997:

President	Mr. Hans Lundborg (Sweden)
Vice-President	Mr. Bruce Lutangu Namakando (Zambia)
Vice-President	Mr. Mochamed Slamet Hidayat (Indonesia)
Vice-President	Mr. Sorin Mihail Tanasescu (Romania)
Vice-President	Ambassador John William Ashe (Antigua and Barbuda)

Approved the agenda and work plan for its first regular session 1997 (DP/1997/L.1) as orally amended;

Approved the report of the third regular session 1996 (DP/1996/39);

Took note of the progress report on the work of the ad hoc working group on rules of procedure (DP/1997/CRP.1);

Took note of the oral report by the Secretary of the Board on the implementation of decision 96/45 on documentation;

Approved the annual work plan 1997 for UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board as orally amended and annexed to the present decision;

Agreed to the following schedule of future sessions of the Executive Board in 1997 subject to the approval of the Committee on Conferences:

Second regular session 1997: 10-14 March 1997

Annual session 1997: 12-23 May 1997 (New York)

Third regular session 1997: 15-19 September 1997

Agreed to the following tentative schedule of future sessions of the Executive Board in 1998:

First regular session 1998: 19-23 January 1998

Second regular session 1998: 20-24 April 1998

Annual session 1998 (Geneva): 25 May-5 June 1998

Third regular session 1998: 7-11 September 1998

Agreed to the subjects to be discussed at the second regular session 1997 of the Board, as listed in table 2 of the annex;

UNFPA SEGMENT

ITEM 2: UNFPA: COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS

Approved the assistance to the Government of Côte d'Ivoire (DP/FPA/CP/169);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Djibouti (DP/FPA/CP/167);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Kenya (DP/FPA/CP/168);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Malawi (DP/FPA/CP/162);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Mexico (DP/FPA/CP/161);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Mongolia (DP/FPA/CP/170);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Morocco (DP/FPA/CP/166);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Nepal (DP/FPA/CP/165);

Approved the assistance to the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania (DP/FPA/CP/164);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Zambia (DP/FPA/CP/163);

Approved the request for extension of, and additional resources for, the UNFPA country programme for Bangladesh (DP/FPA/1997/2);

Approved the request for extension of, and additional resources for, the UNFPA country programme for Nicaragua (DP/FPA/1997/1);

Approved the request for extension of, and additional resources for, the UNFPA country programme for the South Pacific (DP/FPA/1997/3);

Agreed to consider UNFPA country programmes at the second regular session 1997, on a no-objection basis, for that session only, without pre-judging the outcome of the discussion on decision 96/13 at the annual session 1997;

ITEM 3: UNFPA: FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Adopted decision 97/2 of 16 January 1997 on UNFPA audit reports;

ITEM 4: UNFPA: COORDINATION IN HEALTH POLICY AND PROGRAMMES

Adopted decision 97/1 of 16 January 1997 on coordination in health policy and programming, follow-up to Executive Board decision 96/38;

UNDP/UNFPA SEGMENT

ITEM 5: HARMONIZATION OF PRESENTATION OF BUDGETS

Approved the proposed format for the biennial support budget of UNDP and UNFPA as contained in document DP/1997/2;

UNDP SEGMENT

ITEM 6: COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS

I

Approved the following country cooperation frameworks:

First country cooperation framework for Belize (DP/CCF/BEL/1);

First country cooperation framework for the Czech Republic (DP/CCF/CZE/1);

First country cooperation framework for Hungary (DP/CCF/HUN/1);

First country cooperation framework for Kazakstan (DP/CCF/KAZ/1);

First country cooperation framework for Kyrgystan (DP/CCF/KYR/1);

First country cooperation framework for the Republic of Moldova (DP/CCF/MOL/1);

First country cooperation framework for the Slovak Republic (DP/CCF/SLO/1);

II

Approved the regional cooperation framework for Latin America and the Caribbean (DP/RCF/RLA/1);

III

Adopted decision 97/5 of 17 January 1997 on the first global cooperation framework (DP/GCF/1);

IV

Took note of the extension of the following country programmes:

Extension of the sixth country programme for Algeria (DP/CP/ALG/6/ EXTENSION I)

Extension of the fifth country programme for Bahrain (DP/CP/BAH/5/ EXTENSION I);

Extension of the sixth country programme for Jordan (DP/CP/JOR/6/ EXTENSION I);

v

Took note of the note of the Administrator on UNDP assistance to Myanmar (DP/1997/4);

ITEM 7: UNDP: FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Adopted decision 97/3 of 16 January 1997 on UNDP audit reports;

Took note of the report of the Administrator on the implementation of decision 96/40 on management, accountability and reserve for field accommodation (DP/1997/CRP.3) with the comments made thereon;

Took note of the additional information on cost segments at UNDP headquarters (DP/1997/CRP.4);

ITEM 8: UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR WOMEN

Adopted decision 97/4 of 17 January 1997 on the United Nations Development Fund for Women;

ITEM 9: OTHER MATTERS

Requested the Administrator to submit, at its second regular session 1997, a revised conference room paper on follow-up to the Economic and Social Council resolution 95/56, taking into consideration comments made during its debate at the first regular session 1997.

Took note of the oral progress report by the Associate Administrator on the implementation of the UNDP accountability framework.

Took note of the closure of the Cyprus country office.

17 January 1997

Annex

UNDP/UNFPA EXECUTIVE BOARD: WORK PLAN 1997

1. In its decision 96/25, the Executive Board decided, inter alia, to introduce an annual work plan and, in paragraph 5 of the same decision, requested that UNDP and UNFPA prepare, for the third regular session "an outline of issues that could be considered by the Board in 1997, based on previous deliberations of the Board and the organizational priorities and objectives set for 1997". Pursuant to that request, the present document proposes a tentative agenda for each session of the Executive Board in 1997, prepared on the basis of the outlines of UNDP and UNFPA issues presented to the Board at its third regular session 1996 (see DP/1996/CRP.13)

and taking into account the comments made by the Board at that session.

2. As discussed at the third regular session 1996, the priority issues for UNDP in 1997 are:

(a) Building poverty eradication into UNDP policy and programming as the top priority;

(b) Management of change;

(c) Resource mobilization;

(d) Implementation of the new programming arrangements;

(e) Supporting the resident coordinator system;

(f) Financial and managerial oversight and planning.

3. Priorities (a), (b), (c) and (e) will be addressed at the annual session of the Executive Board, in the context of the annual report of the Administrator.

4. Regarding the implementation of the new programming arrangements, it is proposed that country cooperation frameworks be taken up by the Executive Board as soon as they are ready for submission, including at the annual session of the Board, in order not to delay their implementation.

5. In addition, it is proposed that a thematic discussion on the national execution modality be taken up at the second regular session of the Executive Board.

6. Various aspects of financial and managerial oversight and planning, i.e., priority (f), will be dealt with at each session.

7. The tentative agendas proposed for the UNFPA segments translate the UNFPA priority issues agreed upon at the third regular session 1996 into specific agenda items. These issues were presented in the UNFPA outline of priority issues for 1997 (see DP/1996/CRP.13) under five priority themes:

(a) Programme priorities;

(b) Programme implementation;

(c) Programme support;

(d) Resources;

(e) Financial, budgetary and administrative matters, including audit.

8. Country programmes and related matters figure significantly in the proposals for the UNFPA segments of the agendas, since the Fund will present an unprecedented number of country programmes for approval in 1997. UNFPA proposes to take up most of the other priority issues presented under themes (a), (b), (c) and (d) during the annual session, since many are to be reported on in the context of the report of the Executive Director for 1996 and the UNFPA work plan for 1998-2001.

9. UNFPA financial, budgetary and administrative matters are proposed for the third regular session in September, as are the issues concerning the monitoring and implementation of technical support services arrangements and the evaluation of UNFPA training activities.

10. Finally, as suggested at the third regular session 1996, the reports of the Administrator and the Executive Director to the Economic and Social Council, the format of which will be agreed jointly among the funds and programmes, will include subjects derived from General Assembly resolution 50/120 for consideration by the Council in 1997, such as capacity-building, country and regional-level coordination, and resources.

EXECUTIVE BOARD OF UNDP/UNFPA TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR 1997

Table 1. First regular session 1997 (13-17 January 1997)

(5 working days)

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
1				ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
	Official (DP/1997/L.1)	A	1/2 day	Provisional agenda, annotations, list of documents
	Official	A		Report on the third regular session 1996
	Official	I		Decisions adopted by the Executive Board in 1996
	CRP	I		Matters relating to the rules of procedure, documentation and functioning of the Executive Board
	CRP	A		Annual work plan 1997 for UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board
				UNFPA SEGMENT
2				COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS
	Official	A	1 day	Country programmes
3				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	Official	I	1/2 day	Audit reports
4	Official	A	1/2 day	COORDINATION IN HEALTH POLICY AND PROGRAMMING
				UNDP/UNFPA SEGMENT
5				HARMONIZATION OF PRESENTATION OF BUDGETS
	Official	A	1/2 day	Harmonization of presentation of budgets and accounts

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
				UNDP SEGMENT
6				COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS
	Official	A	1/2 day	Country cooperation frameworks and global/regional cooperation frameworks
7				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	Official	I	{	Audit reports
	CRP	I	{	Implementation of decision 96/40 on management, accountability and reserve for field accommodation
	CRP	I	1/2 day {	Additional information on cost segments at UNDP headquarters
	Oral	I	{	Report on the accountability system of UNDP
8				UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR WOMEN
	CRP	I	1/2 day	Follow-up to decision 96/43
9				OTHER MATTERS
	CRP	I	1/4 day	Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolution 95/56

Abbreviations: A = action; CRP = conference room paper; and I = information.

Table 2. Second regular session 1997 (10-14 March 1997)

(5 working days)

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
1				ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
	Official (DP/1997/L.2)	A	((	Provisional agenda, annotations, list of documents
	Official	A	((	Report on the first regular session 1997
			(	UNDP SEGMENT
2			1½ days ((	COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS
	Official	A	((	Country cooperation frameworks and regional cooperation frameworks
	CRP	A	((	Format and timing for review of the new programming arrangements (96/7)
	CRP	I	1/2 day	National execution
3				UNITED NATIONS CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT FUND
	Official	A	1/2 day	United Nations Capital Development Fund (including strategy and business plans)
4				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	CRP	A	1/2 day	Outline of overall strategy for the budget for the biennium 1998-1999 (96/41, para. 4)
	Oral	I		Report on the accountability system of UNDP
				UNFPA SEGMENT
6	Official	A	2 days ((	COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS
7			(	OTHER MATTERS including: - Report on Reserve for field accommodation - Revised report on follow-up to ECOSOC resolution 95/56

Abbreviations: A = action; CRP = conference room paper; and I = information.

Note: An informal briefing on the special initiative for Africa will be held during the session.

Table 3. Annual session 1997 (12-23 May 1997)

(10 working days)

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
1				ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
	Official (DP/1997/L.3)	A		Provisional agenda, annotations, list of documents/work plan
	Official	A		Report on the second regular session 1997
	Official	A		Rules of procedure: report of ad hoc open-ended working group
				UNFPA SEGMENT
2	Official		1½ days	REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR 1996
				- Core programme areas - Evaluation - Implementation of ICPD Programme of Action - Global contraceptive commodity programme - Resources
3	Official	A	1/2 day	INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY
4	Official	A	1/2 day	WORK PLAN AND REQUEST FOR EXPENDITURE AUTHORITY, 1998-2001
5	Official	I	1/2 day	STATUS OF FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION OF UNFPA COUNTRY PROGRAMMES
6	Official	A	1 day	COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS
				UNDP/UNFPA SEGMENT
7				REPORTS TO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
	Official	I	1/2 day	Report to the Economic and Social Council: report of the Administrator
				Report to the Economic and Social Council: report of the Executive Director
				UNDP SEGMENT
8				ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATOR
	Official + CRPs[a]	A		Introduction by the Administrator
	Official	A		Main programme record, including reporting on special funds
				Assistance to the Palestinian people
				NADAF and the Special Initiative for Africa
	Official	I	2½ days[b]	Evaluation, including impact measurement
				Resources
	Official	I		Internal oversight, accountability and reports of the Joint Inspection Unit

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
			(	Change management
	Official	I	(	Statistical annex
	Official	I	((	Subcontracts awarded and major equipment ordered
9				COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS
	Official	A	1/2 day	Country cooperation frameworks and regional cooperation frameworks
10				COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION PROGRAMME
	Official	I	1/2 day	UNDP information and publication policy (96/22)
11				UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR WOMEN
	Official	A	1/2 day	United Nations Development Fund for Women (95/18)
12			((	FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	Official	I	(1 day (	Report on the accountability system of UNDP
13			((	UNITED NATIONS OFFICE FOR PROJECT SERVICES
	Official	A	((	Report on the United Nations Office for Project Services (96/33)
14			1/2 day	OTHER MATTERS

Abbreviations: A = action; CRP = conference room paper; I = information; and ICPD = International Conference on Population and Development.

[a] Documentation will also be submitted on poverty eradication.

[b] Including a special panel discussion on poverty eradication.

Table 4. Third regular session 1997 (15-23 September 1997)

(5 working days)

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
1				ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
	Official (DP/1997/L.4)	A	1/2 day	Provisional agenda, annotations, list of documents
	Official	A		Report on the annual session 1997
	CRP	I		Outline for Executive Board work plan 1998
				UNDP SEGMENT
2				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	Official	A	1½ days	Budget estimates for the biennium 1998-1999 (96/41, para. 4)
	Official	A		Revised budget estimates for the biennium 1996-1997
	Official	I		Annual review of the financial situation 1996
	Official	I		Activities of Inter-Agency Procurement Services Office
3				UNOPS: FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	Official	A	1/2 day	Budget estimates for the biennium 1998-1999
	Official	A		Revised budget estimates for the biennium 1996-1997
	Official	I		Audit reports
4				COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS
	Official	A	1/2 day	Country cooperation frameworks and regional cooperation frameworks
				UNFPA SEGMENT
6				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	Official	A	1½ days	Biennial budget estimates
	Official	A		Annual financial review, 1996
	Official	I		Implementation and monitoring of technical support services arrangements
	Official	I		Evaluation of UNFPA training activities

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
7	Official	A	1/2 day	COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS
8				OTHER MATTERS

Abbreviations: A = action; CRP = conference room paper; I = information; and UNOPS = United Nations Office for Project Services.

Note: Review of field visits will be taken up in informal consultations during the session.

Part two

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

Held at United Nations Headquarters from
10 to 14 March 1997

I. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Introduction

1. The President of the Executive Board opened the session. He noted that the Bureau had met three times since the first regular session on matters before the second regular session.

2. The Secretary of the Executive Board drew the attention of the Board to the annotated agenda contained in document DP/1997/L.2/Rev.1. She noted that the only addition to the documentation list contained in that document was the executive summary of the evaluation of national execution contained in document DP/1997/CRP.12, which was added as a result of discussions at the pre-session informal meeting. All the documentation for the session was available in languages except for the report of first regular session 1997, which was only available in English. The decisions adopted at the first session were contained in document DP/1997/11, which was available in all official languages. All conference room papers for the session were available in the three working languages, except for DP/1997/CRP. 9, which had not been issued by the time of the opening of the session. A revised work plan had been distributed. The Secretary noted that separate discussions on the country cooperation frameworks (CCFs) of Eritrea, India, Mauritania and Mongolia and the country programme for Albania had been requested by at least five members of the Board. The CCFs and the UNFPA country programmes for Eritrea and India would be considered in a joint UNDP/UNFPA segment.

3. The Secretary announced that there would be informal briefings on United Nations system coordination in India with representatives of UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF, on the UNDP MicroStart programme, and with the UNFPA country representatives in Eritrea and Senegal. Informal consultations on UNDP change management (UNDP 2001) and with the UNFPA country representative in Albania would also be held. The Secretary informed the Executive Board that UNDP Resident Representatives for India and Mauritania, and UNFPA country representatives in Albania, Eritrea, India, and Senegal would attend the session. She noted that several background papers on various subjects were available in the room.

4. The Executive Board approved the provisional agenda as contained in DP/1997/L.2/Rev.1:

Item 1. Organizational matters

UNDP segment

Item 2. Country cooperation frameworks and related matters
Item 3. United Nations Capital Development Fund
Item 4. Financial, budgetary and administrative matters

UNFPA segment

Item 5. Country programmes and related matters
Item 6. Other matters

5. The Executive Board agreed to the revised work plan as distributed by the Secretariat.

6. The Executive Board agreed to postpone consideration of the report of the first regular session 1997 (DP/1997/6) to the annual session 1997.

7. The draft agenda for the annual session 1997, contained in document DP/1997/L.3, was distributed. The Secretary informed the Executive Board that the pre-session informal for the annual session would be held on 28 April. She noted that the overview decision included the schedule for future sessions of the Board. In 1996, the Board had indicated its preference to hold the annual session in June, rather than in May. That would entail issuing the report to the Economic and Social Council at an earlier session than the annual session.

8. The President informed the Executive Board that an informal discussion on national execution was planned for 16 May.

9. The Administrator thanked the Executive Board for its work during the current session on a number of key issues. He anticipated a fruitful discussion on the annual report and change management proposals at the annual session. A special event on poverty eradication, which would look at success stories, the causes of poverty, as well as the role of the United Nations, would be an additional element at the annual session. It was hoped that the event would attract high-level participation from capitals.

10. The Deputy Executive Director (Programme) of UNFPA (Policy and Administration) thanked the Executive Board for its guidance during the session, particularly with reference to the country programmes presented. He extended thanks to all who had been involved in the organization of the session.

11. One delegation noted that a draft decision which it had circulated had been withdrawn. The President thanked all concerned, including the Bureau for its support and the Executive Board members and observers.

UNDP SEGMENT

Statement by Administrator

12. The Administrator welcomed the Executive Board and gave an overview of the subjects that would be taken up during the session. He briefed the Board on the status of programme delivery, noting that 1996 indicative planning figure (IPF) delivery was currently estimated at $480 million, or 10 per cent more than in 1995. The 1997 delivery forecast for country and regional programmes stood at $570 million, which implied that some $780 million in 1997 budgets would be

Best copy available

approved prior to July. As at the end of February 1997, approvals had reached a level of $406 million, or 52 per cent of the amount required. The Special Delivery Task Force met every second week under the chairmanship of the Associate Administrator and closely monitored the prospects for accelerated programme build-up. The $2 million allocated from the contingency fund for a special delivery support facility had already been released, with $1.5 million of it approved. Another oral report would be given at the annual session and a comprehensive written report on 1997 to 1999 programme delivery would be submitted at the third regular session 1997.

13. The Administrator gave an overview of the change management process in UNDP, which would be considered in detail at the informal consultation during the session. An advance copy of the document on change management to be issued at the annual session 1997 was distributed to the Executive Board to enable members to consult with their capitals at an early stage. An informal note on the proposed organizational structure and functions was circulated. Additional conference room papers would be provided. He underlined the linkage between change management and the new budget strategy, which would be taken up by the Board during the current session.

14. With regard to overall United Nations reform, the Administrator briefed the Executive Board on the first meeting of the Development Operations Group, one of four sectoral groups created by the Secretary-General since entering office. The Executive Committee of the Development Operations Group was composed of all United Nations funds and programmes active in development operations. The terms of reference for the committee had been made available to the Board. The Administrator noted that his role as convener of the Development Operations Group replaced his earlier assignment as Special Coordinator for Economic and Social Affairs. The new committee would promote complementarity, cohesion, and collaboration, with the overall goal of providing programme countries with enhanced development cooperation. The Office of United Nations Support and Services (OUNS) would continue to provide operational support to the resident coordinator system and serve as secretariat for the Development Operations Group. It was anticipated that secondments from other United Nations entities to OUNS would take place.

15. The Administrator briefed the Executive Board on his press conference of 7 March on the Reserve for Field Accommodation. A oral progress report would be given later in the session (see "Other matters").

16. A review of recent activities followed, which included references to the UNDP role in the Microcredit Summit, held on 4 February in Washington, D. C., gender-mainstreaming initiatives within the organization, and a policy analysis study on energy after Rio, a contribution by UNDP to the Special Session of the General Assembly on the follow-up to the Earth Summit. He noted other recent UNDP activities in disaster relief and in assistance to post-conflict countries. A series of "town hall" meetings had been launched in the United States with the intention of familiarizing United States citizens with the challenges of African development in particular and the work of the United Nations in general. The Human Development Report 1997, the focus of which was poverty, would be launched in Germany and South Africa jointly on 12 June. He acknowledged and thanked the delegation of the United Kingdom for its contribution of $100,000 to

strengthening the editorial and other functions of the Executive Board Secretariat.

17. Several speakers thanked the Administrator for his comprehensive statement. One delegation requested further information on the Executive Committee of the Development Operations Group, including how its work related to that of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy (JCGP). Other questions posed related to clarification of the delivery situation, secondments to OUNS and the change management process, in particular the "focus within the focus" of UNDP. One speaker sought more disaggregated information data on delivery, in particular in least developed countries. Programme countries must be actively involved in the consultations on change management.

18. The Administrator was encouraged to continue to pursue the measures described with regard to the Reserve for Field Accommodation. The work to promote gender mainstreaming in UNDP was welcomed. It was suggested that UNDP replicate the town hall meetings mentioned by the Administrator in more countries.

19. One delegation stated that UNDP was leading the reform process of the development system. Efforts to streamline UNDP, and to create a more transparent and responsive organization, were welcomed. Another delegation invited the Administrator and other senior officials to participate in the International Development Seminar to be held in Tokyo in October 1997.

20. In response to the query raised, the Administrator stated that the Development Operations Group had discussed the role of JCGP and was looking into the possibility of merging the two entities. Only the International Fund for Agricultural Development did not belong to the Development Operations Group. He stressed that a new round of meetings should not be created, and the mandates of JCGP must be fulfilled. The principal effort was strengthening the cohesion and collaboration at the country level. Many issues emanated from other inter-agency processes, including the follow-up to conferences, promotion of the Special Initiative on Africa, strengthening development cooperation with the Bretton Woods institutions, collaboration with civil society organizations, strengthening of the resident coordinator system, and, in particular with regard to JCGP members, the mandates for harmonization, including among programming cycles. A more joint approach at the country level was being discussed. While no formal decision had been taken, he noted that UNICEF had indicated that it would second a staff member to OUNS. There was at present no formal reporting mechanism on the work of the Development Operations Group to the Executive Board.

21. With reference to the change management process, a conference room paper on the "focus within the focus" would be available in April. The real focus must occur at the country level, with more clarity needed on the services UNDP could provide most effectively. The services would be within the mandate of sustainable human development approved by the Board, with poverty eradication as the overriding aim.

22. The Associate Administrator informed the Executive Board that the 1997 core programme delivery figures mentioned by the Administrator related only to

TRAC 1 and 2 and the regional programmes. If TRAC 3 and other programme and programme-related lines of the financial framework were included, the delivery estimate would be close to $766 million. IPF carry-over entitlements from the previous cycle, which stood at about $500 million, needed to be met during the current programming period. The current resource projection was less than the $3.3 billion targeted in decision 95/23. Delivery was projected to rise from $766 million to about $835 million in 1998 and then to almost $900 million in 1999. Thus, by the end of the period, the balance of liquid reserves should be minimal. Expenditure targets for 1997 for country resources (i.e., TRAC 1 and 2 and IPF carry-over) were currently set at $578 million. Of that, $277 million pertained to expenditure expected in Africa (representing 74 per cent of the peak budget target for the region; $182 million for Asia (representing 70 per cent of the peak budget target for the region); $41 million for Arab States; $42 million for Latin America and the Caribbean; and about $35 million for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States.

II. COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS

A. Regional and country cooperation frameworks

1. Africa

First regional cooperation framework for Africa

23. The Assistant Administrator and Regional Director of the Regional Bureau for Africa introduced the regional cooperation framework for Africa (DP/RCF/RBA/1). A supplementary note had been made available to the Executive Board. The note responded to comments made at an informal meeting held on 26 February.

24. The President underlined the importance of benchmarks and indicators referred to in the supplementary paper.

25. One delegation, on behalf of the African Group, noted that the process of arriving at the regional cooperation frameworks was elaborate and allowed for the Executive Board to have oversight. The speaker noted that while country cooperation frameworks had a clear constituency and were in many cases assisted by the country strategy notes, the regional cooperation frameworks needed to take account of the often diverse needs of an entire region. Following the informal meeting on 26 February, further reviews of the text had taken place. While some parts of the framework could be supported there was a need for a more comprehensive approach, especially with regard to the inclusion of "best practices". The regional framework should be derived from principles similar to those governing the CCFs. Regional ownership should be emphasized in support of regional cooperation initiatives. The diversity within regions must be considered, and thus place emphasis on subregional activities and regional execution, including the involvement of Governments and regional institutions. Other partners could participate as appropriate. The programme approach should be incorporated in the regional framework. The framework should emphasize

monitoring and impact. The regional commissions could play a leading role at the macro-level. A serious attempt should be made to optimize resources, with concentration on activities of a truly regional or subregional activity receiving funding priority. A macro-evaluation could be beneficial. The African Group supported the issuance of an annual progress report and a review at the end of the cycle. Poverty eradication should be the overriding emphasis of the framework.

26. Another delegation expressed support for the previous statement. The speaker supported the four focus areas of the framework and the participatory approach.

27. One speaker stated that the development priorities in the framework were those of African governments. He welcomed the efforts of UNDP in the area to work with regional institutions in Africa and expressed the hope that the necessary resources would be available from both core and non-core sources. The targeted amount of $293 million appeared insufficient for the period 1997-2001.

28. Some speakers, while expressing support for the matrix in the document, noted that industrialization was missing.

29. One delegation, also on behalf of another, stated that the time frames for regional programmes should be uniform. The supplementary information helped to understand the regional cooperation framework, as the original document needed more elaboration. Regional programmes must complement country programmes, show value added, and demonstrate linkage with the programmes of bilateral donors and with national planning cycles. The delegation queried the portion of the budget earmarked for TCDC and for evaluation activities.

30. Other delegations also called for improvement in the regional cooperation framework, noting that the original documentation should have included the supplementary information in order to obtain a more thorough briefing from their capitals. The areas in which UNDP had a comparative advantage should be highlighted, such as governance. The concerns of donors must be taken into account in order for financial support to continue. One delegation underlined the importance of the regional cooperation framework to the Meeting of the Tokyo International Conference on Africa Development (TICAD II) process.

31. The Permanent Representative of the United Republic of Tanzania, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, expressed full support for the regional cooperation framework. The regional framework supplemented national development efforts. Donors should ensure that more resources were devoted to the regional programme or its goals would not be attained. One of the key elements was the use of TCDC as an instrument for programme implementation. He also expressed the support of the Group of 77 and of China for the first cooperation framework for technical cooperation among developing countries (DP/CF/TCDC/1), which would be taken up in a separate discussion.

32. One delegation noted that the framework covered sub-Saharan Africa, yet the supplementary note referred to the Nile Basin Project, in which Egypt and Sudan were participating. The speaker also queried how UNDP would coordinate the regional programme with the activities of the United Nations New Agenda for

the Development of Africa and the United Nations System-Wide Initiative on Africa. More information on cooperation between UNDP and the Organization of African Unity, particularly in conflict prevention, was also sought.

33. The Assistant Administrator noted that the document contained a framework and that operational details would emerge as specific programmes were developed. The programme included areas identified in the SHD framework, were demand-driven, and included the participation of regional institutions and implementation by agencies. Regional institutions would be used as a link with national institutions. Interventions in the area of peace and security were included in the governance programme, which was linked to the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa. The Regional Bureau for Africa participated in joint activities with the Regional Bureau for Arab States. The figure of $91 million contained in document DP/RCF/RBA/1 was an allocation for three years of a five-year programme.

34. One delegation noted that the goals and principles of the framework were appropriate, in particular governance and support to the private sector. The comparative advantage of supporting activities at the regional level versus at the national level must be examined. Clarification was sought on the use of funding from the Global Environment Facility and the Montreal Protocol fund.

35. Another speaker underlined the need for the Executive Board to provide guidance on the format and contents of the documentation for regional cooperation frameworks. It was essential that the results of evaluations be included and highlighted in the regional programmes. He cited the results of the mid-term review of the African regional programme, which had warned against underbudgeting, stressed the need to include lessons learned and suggested limitation of themes in regional programmes. The supplementary note addressed some of those concerns, yet more explicit information was needed.

36. One delegation emphasized the need for sustainability in the activities in the programme. Some elements extended beyond the niche of UNDP. Ownership by Governments must be assured. The speaker requested information on which countries were involved in the regional programme. Some delegations underlined the need to demonstrate concrete linkage with poverty eradication and a key role of gender issues in the programme.

37. The need for the regional programme to be beneficiary driven was underlined by one delegation. Further resource mobilization was required.

38. The Assistant Administrator commented that the previous system of the project approach had led UNDP to respond to a wide variety of requests from regional and subregional organizations. Greater details on programmes, benchmarks and targets would be included in the following year's report to the Executive Board, which would be based on an enhanced consultative process. The programme would emphasize areas where UNDP had a comparative advantage. The matrix included in the framework document was illustrative at the present time. In response to a query, she noted that the knowledge network facility was designed to promote access to a network of professionals and specialists involved in the region. Best practices and the results of evaluations would be taken into account in forming new programmes. Joint meetings were held with the

Regional Bureau for Arab States on the subject of the Nile River Basin. She underlined that programmes were demand-driven, UNDP did work with recipients and in areas where it had a comparative advantage. The RBA newsletter was available in French.

Country cooperation frameworks for Africa

39. The President informed the Executive Board that five written requests had been received for consideration of the CCFs for Eritrea and Mauritania. The CCF for Eritrea would be taken up in the joint segment of UNDP and UNFPA (see chapter VI).

40. The Assistant Administrator introduced the first country cooperation frameworks for the Africa region.

41. The Executive Board approved the first country cooperation frameworks for Ethiopia (DP/CCF/ETH/1), Namibia (DP/CCF/NAM/1), and Uganda (DP/CCF/UGA/1) and took note of the extension of the sixth country programme for Kenya (DP/CP/KEN/6/EXTENSION I).

First country cooperation framework for Mauritania

42. The Assistant Administrator introduced the first country cooperation framework for Mauritania (DP/CCF/MAU/1).

43. One delegation expressed support for the themes of the framework. Support to governance was a priority, in particular with regard to the inclusion of civil society and support to decentralization. The question that gender issues were not explicitly referred to in the document was raised. Clarification was sought on the reference to fishing agreements with the European Union. Further information on how UNDP would strengthen Mauritanian competence in national execution was sought.

44. Another delegation expressed its concern that the programme was quite broad, although the priority areas were well chosen. The impact of the programme could be enhanced if the priorities included a smaller number of subsectors. Clarification was sought of the link between the CCF and the regional cooperation framework for Africa. One delegation queried how the country office would mobilize funding in the context of the regional cooperation framework. In particular, clarification was sought on the role of UNDP headquarters units in assisting Mauritania to access funds or mobilize them for pilot projects.

45. In addressing the queries raised by delegations, and the clarification sought by them, the Resident Representative in Mauritania informed the Executive Board of the process that had led to the formulation of the first CCF for Mauritania. He emphasized the dialogue and consultation established with the national authorities, the donor community, civil society, and the private sector, who had all participated actively in the different stages of the preparation of the advisory note. The full support by all partners of the three areas of concentration had led to the formulation of the CCF. The comments of the local approval committee had confirmed the relevance of the focus areas to

national objectives. The document drew on priorities defined in the country strategy note and the operationalization of SHD through its prospective outputs: the national framework on SHD, the Observation Centre on SHD, the National Report on SHD, and the National Strategy on SHD.

46. With reference to the comment that gender was not included in the document, the Resident Representative highlighted the ongoing activities that targeted women through an operational subgroup on the promotion of cooperative associations for women, complementing the work of other donors in the advancement of women. To ensure that women participated in all programmes, gender was viewed in the CCF as a cross-cutting theme to be taken into account in all three areas of concentration. With regard to the query regarding fishing agreements with the European Union, he explained that the fishing industry played a major role in the Mauritanian economy in the post-adjustment period. The Resident Representative explained that there would be selection of catalytic programmes with the areas of concentration in the CCF. With regard to national execution, he emphasized the role of ownership, the role to be played by the national authorities, and explained the coordination and implementation mechanism established to support the national execution modality. That mechanism included a steering committee for programming, a coordination unit, a workshop on national execution, an annual audit, and the use of implementing agencies to support the modality.

47. The Resident Representative noted that the country had not been very involved in regional cooperation in the past. Now, however, he could confirm the convergence of the areas of concentration chosen in the CCF and the ones elaborated in the regional framework. Complementarity and inclusion of gender linkage would be sought. For funding of pilot projects, he confirmed the recourse to funds administered by the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, and especially funds for the Poverty Strategy Initiative for the programmes in poverty eradication. In response to a query raised, he noted that there had been a positive evaluation of the electrification project funded by the Global Environment Facility and implemented by a non-governmental organization, and close consultation with the Caisse Francaise de développement to capitalize and expand on the wind energy project.

48. The Executive Board approved the first country cooperation framework for Mauritania (DP/CCF/MAU/1).

2. Asia and the Pacific

First regional cooperation framework for Asia and the Pacific

49. The Assistant Administrator and Regional Director of the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific introduced the first regional cooperation framework for Asia and the Pacific (DP/RCF/RAP/1).

50. One delegation, on behalf of the Asia and Pacific Group, stated that the consultative process leading up to the regional framework with Governments and regional organizations had been very useful. The thematic areas contained in the framework corresponded closely to national policies. Clarification was sought on the reference in the document regarding the activities of countries in

the environment area. The speaker underlined the efforts of countries in the region to protect the environment and thus, national efforts should thus be included. More technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC) was encouraged. It was requested that paragraph 34 include references to sub-regional cooperation. He also noted that the issue of sustainability did not appear in the document. Knowledge available in the region should be fully maximized and the sense of ownership by the region enhanced.

51. Another delegation thanked UNDP for the supplementary information provided. The speaker requested information on the goals of UNDP in the regional framework. The themes in the framework closely matched UNDP priority areas. However, goals and targets could be better elaborated to increase the ability to assess the framework in the future. More information on the comparative advantage of UNDP in the region was sought, as was the indication that UNDP would provide poverty and human development indicators. The speaker emphasized that much information on indicators already existed. Information on resource allocation should have been included in the framework.

52. Another speaker emphasized that his Government intended to cooperate with several of the regional activities elaborated in the document.

53. Several speakers praised the framework as demonstrating cooperation within the region. Effective use of the TCDC modality would be most welcome. One speaker requested more information on interventions by UNDP within the regional programme on natural disaster-preparedness and on the feasibility of applying national execution in the programme.

54. Another delegation sought information regarding the comparative advantage of UNDP in certain programme areas such as the environment and international trade and investment since many organizations were active in those fields. Clarification on the reference to "strategic labour force planning" was also sought. The Assistant Administrator responded to the queries raised by the speakers. He noted that UNDP was very aware of the efforts of Asian and Pacific countries in the field of environment. He hoped that through the regional programme, TCDC would increase through information and experience-sharing. It was hoped that eventually all countries would be able to enhance information-sharing through Internet technology. Links between sub regional organizations were being examined. Sustainability was a key factor and would be ensured. UNDP worked closely with intergovernmental mechanisms in the region as a means of ensuring sustainability. A good example of successful regional programmes were the Mekong River and Tumen River programmes, which entailed cooperation among several countries in each. UNDP had no intention of replicating indicators developed by others. He was pleased that the Government of Japan would increase its cooperation with the Mekong programme in collaboration with UNDP. With regard to disaster management, he noted that it was the decision of the countries on whether to involve UNDP. A proper niche for UNDP work in trade and investment had been worked out. The reference in paragraph 25 was to maximizing of human resources. He emphasized the importance of the roles of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and the United Nations in the regional framework. National execution was used widely in the region.

55. One delegation raised several queries about references in the framework,

including one in paragraph 17 to the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), the New Initiatives Programme referred to in paragraph 36, and the sustainability of transboundary issues and their link with TCDC. The speaker hoped there would be a renewed commitment to regional cooperation and the active involvement of programmes with SAARC.

56. Another delegation stated that the cooperation framework was part of a broader agenda of in-country cooperation. Referring to paragraph 17, he underlined the usefulness of intercountry cooperation and suggested that there be a similar initiative with the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO). He underlined the importance for many countries in the region of natural disaster reduction and disaster management, and work with refugees and displaced persons with a view to development, the region, for which UNDP contributions were very useful.

57. One speaker underlined the role of the Tumen River development project in harmonizing and reducing customs barriers and promoting investments. His Government had contributed $1 million to that project. It later set up a $250,000 trust fund for cooperation in the region.

58. One representative stated that the cooperation framework was a good effort although general in nature, (e.g. the wording on the design of policies). His Government would wish to receive the annual reviews referred to in the document, in particular those elaborating on regional and sub-regional aspects. One speaker called for more information on activities in the Pacific subregion, including those relating to natural disasters. UNDP was commended for cooperation with the Pacific subregional bodies, including its offer to assist with building capacity of the APEC regional centre for the Pacific in Papua New Guinea.

59. One representative stated that more analysis and integration of information on the causes of poverty should have been reflected in the framework. The document should refer to "optimal" use rather than "efficient" use of resources. It was recommended that the Bretton Woods institutions and Asian Development Bank be included in the framework. Another speaker noted the useful areas of cooperation elaborated in the framework, in particular in its incorporation of positive experiences accumulated in previous programmes on the development of subregional cooperation.

60. The Assistant Administrator noted that the references indicated by one delegation on names of subregional organizations referred to in the document were typographical errors and would be corrected. The New Initiatives programme was intended to work with and help countries as well as regional and subregional entities. UNDP was cognizant of the political sensitivity of transboundary activities and would ensure that any programme undertaken be at the request, invitation and in partnership with Governments. UNDP would consult with the SAARC Secretariat on South Asian sub-regional activities. The Memorandum of Understanding between ECO and UNDP would enable strengthened cooperation. He noted that the reference by the Republic of Korea to its contribution included in the resource mobilization table would be amended to include the latest contribution. In response to another query, he noted that programmes in enabling economic environment and public policy were meant to support key government

policies. Copies of annual reviews would be distributed. He informed the Executive Board that the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific was providing technical assistance and seed money to Asian and Pacific countries for the preparation of national human development reports. Gender advisers in the field would enable increased mainstreaming of gender issues. The Asian Development Bank and the World Bank would be kept fully informed of the activities of the regional programme.

61. The Executive Board approved the regional cooperation framework for Asia and the Pacific (DP/RCF/RAP/1).

Country cooperation frameworks for Asia and Pacific region

62. In accordance with the arrangements made by the secretariat, the first country cooperation framework for India was considered in the joint UNDP/UNFPA segment (see chapter VI).

First country cooperation framework for Papua New Guinea

63. One delegation welcomed the first country cooperation framework for Papua New Guinea (DP/CCF/PNG/1), in particular the sound collaborative approach on which it was based. Noting that the Government of this country, Australia, was a major donor of bilateral assistance to Papua New Guinea, the representative sought clarification on the following areas of the UNDP programme: the level of UNDP staff anticipated, past efforts at cost-sharing, and in particular, UNDP activities in Bougainville. With regard to the latter, the representative sought more information on UNDP plans for a meeting to raise additional funds for the construction and rehabilitation of Bougainville, for which $1.2 million was already planned in the first CCF. Seeking information on who would be invited to participate in the meeting and on which donors had previously made firm funding commitments, the representative noted that Australia had provided programme aid for Bougainville since 1991; experience suggested that in order to support effectively a peace process, any major reconstruction programme for Bougainville should be coordinated through, or with the close collaboration of, relevant local-level authorities. He welcomed the opportunity to coordinate his country's efforts with those of UNDP and others in Papua New Guinea.

64. The representative of Papua New Guinea commended the Resident Representative in Papua New Guinea for his work and endorsed the collaborative effort of UNDP in setting up the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation centre in the country. He also recognized UNDP work in microcredits for women. Clarification was sought on the reference in paragraph 14 of document DP/CCF/PNG/1 to the UNDP role in aid coordination, policy development and planning, which he stressed were in the exclusive domain of the Government. Programmes must be clarified with the Government before they were implemented, particularly those in Bougainville. UNDP assistance should be undertaken within the policy directives and framework acceptable to the Government of Papua New Guinea as the legitimate governing authority. The representative also raised concern about paragraph 39 of the document with reference to the Government request regarding resource mobilization for activities in Bougainville. He emphasized that any funding for that purpose should be channelled through the Government.

65. The Permanent Representative of the People's Democratic Republic of Lao stated that the first country cooperation framework (DP/CCF/LAO/1) was fully in line with his country's national development plan. The focus area of environment was particularly important. The Lao People's Democratic Republic remained a least developed country despite economic growth of 6.4 per cent in 1996. Natural disasters had caused lasting consequences. The UNDP programme would help to strengthen the capacity of his country to plan and implement projects.

66. One delegation, in referring to the case-by-case project report on Afghanistan (DP/1997/7) expressed full support to UNDP for its work in that country. The speaker hoped that coordination problems in Afghanistan had been resolved.

67. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau of Asia and the Pacific informed the Executive Board that, with reference to the first CCF for Papua New Guinea, the staffing level would be according to that approved in the budget strategy. Any additional posts would be funded through non-core resources for project implementation. He assured the representative of Papua New Guinea that UNDP implemented projects in the country only at the request of the Government.

68. The Resident Representative in Papua New Guinea, in response to the query raised, noted that the $6 million in Government cost-sharing represented a small decrease as compared with the past three years and no increase was expected. He recognized the generous support of the Government of Australia in cost-sharing in Papua New Guinea. He noted that UNDP worked strictly within the Government policy framework with regard to Bougainville. A conference on Bougainville would not be convened until the situation there allowed commencement of rehabilitation and restoration. Support from donors had not yet been solicited. One donor had indicated support for such a conference, and two others had indicated so informally.

69. The Assistant Administrator noted that UNDP had followed the recommendations of the Ashgabad meeting very closely with regard to coordination of assistance in Afghanistan. The Administrator planned to appoint a new Resident Representative in Afghanistan and it was hoped that coordination within the United Nations system would improve.

70. The Executive Board approved the first country cooperation frameworks for Bhutan (DP/CCF/BHU/1), the Lao People's Democratic Republic (DP/CCF/LAO/1), and Papua New Guinea (DP/CCF/PNG/1) and took note of the case-by-case project report on Afghanistan (DP/1997/7).

First country cooperation framework for Mongolia (DP/CCF/MON/1)

71. One delegation expressed its support to the programme and for the first country cooperation framework document (DP/CCF/MON/1), as it identified problems and bottlenecks in an open and precise manner. The focus areas were well chosen and the priority to development coordination welcomed.

72. Another delegation supported the active involvement of UNDP in Mongolia. Clarification was sought about UNDP work in promoting local governance, given Mongolia's sparse population and on the sustainability of poverty alleviation interventions through the use of United Nations Volunteers (UNV) specialists. His Government would collaborate with UNDP in Mongolia through multi-bi funding and a human development cooperation fund.

73. The Permanent Representative of Mongolia elaborated the elements of the first CCF. He emphasized the significant role of UNDP in management development and aid coordination. He noted the recent onset of poverty in Mongolia, which had become a major social issue in the 1990s. His Government hoped to reduce poverty levels, which had risen to 36 per cent in recent years, to 10 per cent. The main priorities of the national poverty action plan were growth and employment promotion, strengthening of social safety nets, focus on gender, and increased grass-roots involvement.

74. The former Resident Representative in Mongolia noted that the strengthening of local governments was not easy. That was undertaken under the programme approach, within the Management Development Programme. The poverty eradication programme was aimed at employment creation at the local level and had been set up to be sustainable. Coordination was aided in Mongolia by the relatively few organizations that were represented there. UNDP tried to serve as a service centre to all donors in Mongolia. Some agencies contributed to local office costs because of the successful coordination. The resource mobilization target might be too ambitious but if one looked at the fifth programming cycle, one could see that a $3 million programme had ultimately resulted in a $60 million programme. The regional programme had benefited Mongolia through the participation of Government officials in regional forums.

75. The Executive Board approved the first country cooperation framework for Mongolia (DP/CCF/MON/1).

3. Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States

First regional cooperation framework for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States

76. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (RBEC) introduced the first regional cooperation framework for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (DP/RCF/REC/1).

77. Many delegations expressed their support for the regional framework. The framework was closely linked with national programmes and goals and had been prepared in close collaboration with countries in the region. The use of national execution and innovative modalities for cooperation were positive features of the framework. Funding under the regional programme would support and complement funding for national activities approved in country cooperation frameworks (CCFs). One speaker pointed out that the work of UNDP in the region complemented the efforts of other donors.

78. Speakers highlighted UNDP work in fostering economies in transition through assistance to the strengthening of the financial services sector, development of democratic institutions, production of national human development reports, and activities described in paragraph 30 of document DP/RCF/REC/1 on sustainable livelihoods. Gender mainstreaming and cooperation with UNIFEM was supported. Several speakers cited the inclusion of technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC) as a positive feature of the framework. The regional umbrella project, AGORA, provided flexibility and a means to provide financing to additional needs. That was especially useful since as the regional programme was limited in resources. One speaker noted that the framework did not include references to coordination and cooperation with other donors, including international financial institutions. Information was also sought on resource allocations, evaluation, and an explanation of the $11 million target in non-core funding. One delegation noted the high absorptive capacity for funding and underlined the usefulness of seed capital to attract additional funding.

79. One speaker requested written information on the experience of integrated offices within RBEC. Another sought clarification about the role of UNDP in assisting countries in joining the European Union and the Organization of Economic Cooperation for Development.

80. One speaker referred to the RBEC initiative to set up a regional support office in Bratislava. UNDP support was helpful in paving the way for those countries in the region that who were "emerging donors". UNDP also helped countries without UNDP offices, which were self-financed through the government contribution to local office costs mechanism. One delegation noted that it participated in UNDP programmes though a national unit staffed by one professional.

81. Some delegations underlined the need to balance economic interventions with social interventions in the region, including through support to civil society and advocacy groups.

82. Several delegations emphasized the need for equal treatment and conditions in RBEC in line with those of other regional bureaux in UNDP, including the level and number of posts in country offices. In that context, the issue of harmonization between allocated core programme resources and the number of core staff of country offices was raised. Several delegations requested the secretariat to submit a conference room paper at the annual session 1997 that would contain comparative statistical data on the subject for each country office and each headquarters unit. One delegation requested distribution of the organizational chart of UNDP at the annual session, which would show the results of the change management process and its impact, unit by unit, including level of staffing.

83. The Assistant Administrator stated that he regretted not being able to respond to all the queries that would be raised, as he was obliged to leave New York on that evening. In his response to the points raised, he stated that his written statement included a resources allocation table by programme theme. Coordination with donors had taken place, within each project, through tripartite meetings. Evaluation was built into the framework and referred to in

his written statement. Non-core funding for the regional programme was modest, as was funding from core. It was hoped that non-core resources would be mobilized at the country level. The focus of the regional framework was on poverty eradication, governance, and sustainable livelihoods. RBEC had been identified as the region with the biggest impact in its regional programme, for example in the area of gender. The experience of UNDP with integrated offices had been useful in that it demonstrated that the concept was useful but in practice did not work. For example, it was learned that United Nations Resident Coordinator could not undertake certain activities since they were not authorized to approve funding while the UNDP representative who served as United Nations deputy representative could, as least as far as UNDP allocated resources were concerned. It was hoped that resources could be channelled from the global programme to the regional programme.

84. One delegation suggested that the programme should also include activities on HIV/AIDS, and had specific comments to make on the regional project "External Resources Management". The implementation process needed improvement, with results of needs assessment missions reacted to promptly and financial arrangements clarified. Unexpected changes owing to decisions taken at UNDP headquarters should be discussed with major donors.

85. The Assistant Administrator responded by giving an overview of the project's achievements and of the discussions he had held with officials of the Austrian Chancellery. He stated that the problems had resulted from differing assessments of the results of the project, which had not been appropriately conveyed to the senior managers of the various organizations to make them to take corrective measures. He was pleased to report that agreement had been reached with the Austrian authorities on follow-up actions regarding the future of that project.

86. One delegation underlined the need to increase staff in country offices in the RBEC region. In expressing particular support for the AGORA project, the speaker thanked RBEC for its assistance in preparing a conference on sustainable development in April 1997 in Belarus with the cooperation of other organizations of the United Nations system as well as with the Governments of Austria and Denmark. The results would enable the strengthening of internal systems and integration into Europe, as well as support sustainable development efforts and serve as an input to the General Assembly at its special session on the review of Agenda 21.

87. One speaker praised the ability of RBEC to undertake so much with minimal resources, a policy his delegation would like to see pursued in the future in UNDP. His delegation supported the current staffing arrangements in RBEC, where the factor of a small number could well have been the decisive one in contributing to the success of the Regional Bureau. He requested information on the priorities of the programme since it was very ambitious. Queries were raised on the use of NGOs in the region and whether the G-7 project in Moscow would be used as a reference for the activities on the management of external resources in the Commonwealth of Independent States. With regard to the environment, there was a discrepancy between the amount allocated and the description of the projects. The speaker also requested information on the

linkage between the themes of the Human Development Report and the National Human Development Reports.

88. Another speaker stated that the RBEC-proposed networking was the way of the future and that national projects that shared regional thematic activities would be built on. One delegation noted that some activities had been discontinued as they fell under the mandate of other institutions.

89. The Deputy Director of RBEC welcomed the suggestions for improving the regional cooperation framework. She hoped that there would be a small increase in the resource allocation to the regional programme. Quality and training were emphasized through capacity-building. While the many activities listed under the Democracy, Governance, Participation project could be interpreted as scattered, it should be realized that they all responded to specific country needs and priorities and that they would not all be undertaken in all countries to the same degree and level. Many of the concerns would be addressed through advocacy activities, given that "advocacy" was a key characteristic of the project. She confirmed the linkage and collaboration with the work of the G-7 in the Russian Federation between the project and database supported by that group. The environmental component needed more work, especially with regard to the definition of projects, which could include components on meeting European environmental standards, deforestation, energy efficiency, and environmental education. There was no clear indication of other partners except for the Global Environment Facility and Capacity 21. UNDP supported countries in acceding to the European Union. The Bureau was involved in the production of the Human Development Report through the participation of the Director in the Reader's Group. The national-based support of the regional programme contributed to the sustainability to the programme. Regional projects would provide complementary financing to national projects. The Regional Bureau was open to collaboration with other regions using the TCDC modality. Twenty per cent devotion to gender in programming was a UNDP corporate goal and should be seen as a minimum standard.

90. The Executive Board approved the first regional cooperation framework for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (1997-1999) (DP/RCF/REC/1).

Country cooperation frameworks for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States

91. One delegation noted the positive feedback his Government had provided on the UNDP programme in Latvia. It was well focused and rational, despite limited resources. Of particular note were the interventions in human rights, sponsorship of a language training programme, and support to the judiciary, as well as assistance in developing a poverty alleviation strategy. His Government praised the performance of the Resident Representative in Latvia.

92. Another delegation underlined the need to ensure that in-depth contacts would be established with the European Commission secretariat with regard to UNDP support to countries wishing to join the European Union. Clarification was sought on the resource mobilization targets for Latvia, which seemed high and could occupy much of the Resident Representative's time.

93. One speaker asked UNDP to be certain that consultants hired to undertake projects be neutral and unbiased in their work.

94. The representative of Latvia expressed appreciation for the positive comments made. He noted that financing was for ongoing programmes in some cases, including the language training programme funded by the European Union. Human resources were limited and the work of the Resident Representative was much appreciated.

95. The representative of Uzbekistan paid tribute to the work of the Regional Bureau and its Director, especially in light of limited staff and many demands. He expressed support for the proposals made by other delegations during the discussion of the budget strategy for 1998-1999. The UNDP office in Uzbekistan was a good example of an integrated office. He highlighted the activities of a subregional programme on drug control, as well as activities within the regional programme which would benefit Uzbekistan.

96. The President informed the Executive Board that the questions of staffing and the level of the Director of RBEC would be discussed in the context of the budget strategy and the change management project.

97. The representative of Croatia stated that the programme in that country was targeted at the areas of most need, including support to rehabilitation and management of foreign aid. The liaison office in Croatia performed good work within existing limited resources.

98. One delegation, also on behalf of another, stated that it was the resoponsibility of the Administrator to make decisions on the staffing of RBEC, not the Executive Board.

99. The President concurred with that view.

100. The representative of Poland cited the recognition of cooperation with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization in the CCF for Poland. The framework would help to solve pressing social and economic needs in Poland as well as facilitate the country's accession to the European Union.

101. The Deputy Director of RBEC thanked the Executive Board for its positive remarks. She noted that half of the non-core resources targeted for the Latvia programme had already been secured.

102. The representative of Romania thanked the Executive Board for the approval of the CCF for Romania. He noted the continued need for support by external funding to the economic reform and social protection programmes undertaken by his Government at the current time of transition. Romania was preparing for accession to the European Union. The CCF was designed to meet the national development goals and priorities, while pursuing the programme approach by areas of concentration and national execution modalities. Enhanced dialogue and partnership in devising the CCF would lead to greater visibility of UNDP activities in Romania. The representative noted that Romania would host the Third International Conference on New and Restored Democracies in September 1997, for which UNDP support had been requested. Resource mobilization,

particularly through cost-sharing, would be a priority of the current programming period. He thanked a number of Governments for their contributions to projects in Romania. Concern was expressed about the large number of responsibilities placed on the Resident Coordinator in Romania and other RBEC offices, in view of their limited staff and resources.

103. The representative of Latvia expressed his Government's appreciation for the approval of the CCF for Latvia. He also thanked the European Union and Nordic countries for their support. Clarification of the earmarking for "other resources" was sought.

104. The Executive Board approved the first country cooperation frameworks for Croatia (DP/CCF/CRO/1), Romania (DP/CCF/ROM/1), Uzbekistan (DP/CCF/UZB/1), Latvia (DP/CCF/LAT/1), and Poland (DP/CCF/POL/1).

4. Country cooperation frameworks for Latin America and Caribbean region

105. The Executive Board approved the first country cooperation frameworks for Colombia (DP/CCF/COL/1) and Panama (DP/CCF/PAN/1) on a no-objection basis. The Board took note of the extension of the fifth country programme for Haiti (DP/CP/HAI/5/EXTENSION I).

106. The Deputy Director of the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean thanked the Executive Board for its confidence in the programmes.

5. First cooperation framework for technical cooperation among developing countries

107. The Director of the Special Unit for Technical Cooperation Among Developing Countries (SU/TCDC) introduced the first cooperation framework for technical cooperation among developing countries for the period 1997-1999 (DP/CF/TCDC/1).

108. Many delegations took the floor to express their support for the framework and its proposed strategy and thematic areas as well as the work SU/TCDC had already undertaken.

109. The Permanent Representative of Tanzania, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, stressed the importance of TCDC. Commitment to TCDC and South-South cooperation was a key concept and strategic dimension in the Declaration of the Twentieth Ministerial Meeting of the Group of 77 and China. The report "New Directions for TCDC" ensured that TCDC would be a dynamic instrument of international cooperation. Strong support for the framework was expressed by the Group of 77 and China. The mandate of SU/TCDC should not be weakened and adequate resources should be provided to it.

110. One delegation, on behalf of the Latin America and Caribbean Group, highlighted the visibility of UNDP work in promoting TCDC and its flexibility in adopting the report on "New Directions for TCDC" when the need arose. Several members of that group, taking the floor individually, supported the goals of the framework. Interventions involving TCDC in UNDP could be even further strengthened. The Special Unit should be maintained as a separate operational

unit to promote regional and interregional cooperation. One delegation noted the role of SU/TCDC as focal point for the follow-up to the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, held in Barbados in 1994. Closer links between TCDC and economic cooperation among developing countries (ECDC) could be promoted.

111. Another delegation, on behalf of the African Group, noted that the framework had developed focus areas beyond those of the fifth programming cycle, as recommended by the report on New Directions for TCDC. The inclusion of proposed solutions and benefits was welcomed. Interventions described in the new framework, particularly in trade and economic cooperation, would enhance South-South cooperation. The dynamic vision of the TCDC framework was recognized at the South-South Conference on Trade, Finance and Investment, held in Costa Rica in January 1997.

112. Several speakers stated that the framework could have included more analysis of the impact of past activities, including lessons learned. While the document pointed to certain activities undertaken in the past, it was not clear how to assess or quantify the results of those actions. More information on the linkage between TCDC activities and other UNDP work needed to be clarified. As a follow-up to the 1995 evaluation of on the use of special programme resources for the promotion of TCDC, it was stated that it would be useful to examine the impact of the work of SU/TCDC in relation to other organizations, the regional distribution, and the ultimate beneficiaries of its activities. UNDP could also initiate an evaluation of its own activities to determine how it might promote the increased application of TCDC to its programmes.

113. One delegation noted that the modalities for achieving the aims described in the framework could be elaborated, including references to the establishment of permanent and practical mechanisms for promoting TCDC. Linkage with focal points in programme countries could be strengthened through an implementation network. The speaker emphasized the need for national partners to remain the driving force in TCDC activities. National authorities should be involved in the decision-making process for programme and project approval.

114. Another speaker encouraged traditional donors to contribute to the South-South Cooperation Trust Fund, established by the General Assembly in resolution 50/119, in particular as a means of encouraging contributions from emerging donors. As an input to the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD II), SU/TCDC was requested to formulate a strategy for South-South cooperation involving Africa. The importance of creating an enabling environment for African development was emphasized by the delegation. The speaker suggested that a coordination unit that would ensure the smooth operation of TCDC programmes and projects be included in UNDP change management proposals. Information should be provided to the Executive Board in 1998 on the output of the TCDC programme in UNDP, based on the new strategic framework.

115. One delegation, supported by another, underlined the need for programme countries to originate ideas for TCDC. The speaker also saw TCDC as a means to achieve goals that went beyond the scope of one unit. Another delegation cited the positive experience in TCDC between countries with economies in transition and those in Latin America. Clarification was sought on the role of United

Nations regional economic commissions in respect of the initiatives to be carried out within the proposed framework. Another requested further information on whether science and technology and capacity-building would be included in the framework.

116. The representative of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) cited recent successful efforts of collaboration between the OIC and SU/TCDC.

117. The Director informed the Executive Board that lessons learned had been included in a more comprehensive way in the full version of the TCDC cooperation framework document, which was made available to the Executive Board. He stated that the mid-term review of the framework could focus on the impact of TCDC activities. He noted that the majority of TCDC projects had been executed by the United Nations Office for Project Services in the past, but that increased emphasis would be placed in future on national execution. In response to other queries raised, he cited the support of SU/TCDC for triangular cooperation, as well as horizontal transfer of technology, and pledged support for the second meeting of TICAD II. He recognized the contribution of the Government of Japan of $2 million to fund South-South cooperation. The Special Unit had worked closely with the Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States in promoting TCDC activities, particularly in the area of governance. Assistance to young entrepreneurs would also be pursued. He noted that SU/TCDC worked closely with United Nations regional economic commissions. Science and technology were in fact priority areas in the TCDC framework. The Special Unit was working with the private sector, particularly in small and medium sized enterprises in Latin America. The Unit was the only part of UNDP subject to a special review, in the form of the High-Level Committee on TCDC, an intergovernmental body that met every two years.

118. The Executive Board took note of the first cooperation framework for technical cooperation among developing countries (DP/CF/TCDC/1).

6. Format and timing for review of the new programming cycle

119. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support introduced the conference room paper on the format and timing for review of the new programming cycle (DP/1997/CRP.7).

120. One delegation requested further information on the nature of the review, whether it would include external inputs and what elements would be covered. Clarification was sought on the reference to monitoring achievement of corporate goals and the countries selected for review referred to in the conference room paper.

121. Another delegation referred to General Assembly resolution 50/120 and the request for evaluations on operational activities for development to be submitted to the General Assembly in 1999. The speaker queried whether there had been contacts with the Secretariat on that subject and requested further information on how UNDP assessed its work regarding evaluation in light of the request by the General Assembly.

122. The Assistant Administrator informed the Executive Board that a combination of external consultants and internal staff would conduct the evaluation, at both the headquarters and country levels. The evaluation would cover the primary objectives guiding the legislation adopted by the Executive Board, the quality, impact and focus of programming under the new arrangements, strengthening of the resident coordinator system, countries in special circumstances, and what had been achieved with regard to the objectives set. Management of resources would be reviewed. He noted that the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs, one of the four sector groups created by the Secretary-General, would review the issues regarding follow-up to General Assembly resolution 50/120.

123. The President cited the interest of the Executive Board in following the work of the executive committees set up by the Secretary-General.

124. The Executive Board took note of the conference room paper on the format and timing for review of the new programming cycle (DP/1997/CRP.7) and measures taken on the implementation of decision 95/23 and agreed that the decision would remain in effect until the review was completed in 1998.

125. Following its discussion on regional programmes, the Executive Board adopted the following decision:

97/9. Guidelines for improving the implementation of regional cooperation programmes

The Executive Board

1. Requests the Administrator to present to the Executive Board for its consideration and approval at the first regular session 1998, an implementation strategy paper for each individual regional cooperation programme; the implementation strategy papers should incorporate the following elements:

(a) The findings of the United Nations Development Programme evaluation entitled "Global, interregional and regional programmes: an evaluation of impact" (November 1996);

(b) A more detailed assessment of lessons learned from previous regional cooperation programmes and their integration into the programming and implementation of the next programmes;

(c) A narrow range of priorities and themes, within a programme-based approach, focusing on areas requiring regional cooperation;

(d) The identification of the role and comparative advantage of UNDP participation in initiatives for regional cooperation and its collaboration with relevant bodies of the United Nations system, including the regional commissions;

(e) Clear linkages between thematic areas in regional programmes and global programmes and between thematic areas and activities in regional programmes and priority programmes at the country level;

(f) An articulation of the strategy through objectives-based programme management techniques, such as the logical framework technique;

(g) A clear presentation of expected results, including identification of target groups and beneficiaries;

(h) A clear linkage between programme objectives and budgetary resources for implementation;

(i) An estimate of resource allocation among thematic areas and institutions;

2. Also requests that each implementation strategy paper contain a strategy for monitoring and evaluation, including practical performance indicators and benchmarks, which will enable the Executive Board to assess the impact of regional cooperation programmes;

3. Emphasizes the need for clear, concise language in the presentation of the regional implementation strategy papers;

4. Also emphasizes the need for regional ownership of the regional programmes and the importance of strengthening the capacity for regional execution by national, subregional and regional institutions, including by the private sector, non-governmental organizations, and academic institutions;

5. Further emphasizes the need to ensure sustainability in the implementation of thematic initiatives included in the regional cooperation programme;

6. Requests the Administrator to present at the first regular session 1998, a timetable for the mid-term review of all regional programmes and to include in the implementation strategy paper for each region a proposal concerning the methodology for the mid-term review;

7. Also requests the Administrator, based on the experience gained during the implementation of the present decision, to elaborate strategic guidelines for the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the regional programme that will apply to all regions.

B. National execution

126. The Associate Administrator introduced the conference room paper on national execution (DP/1997/CRP.8). He emphasized the growth in the modality, citing the preliminary 1996 figures, which indicated that national execution accounted for 79 per cent of project and programme budgets. It promoted ownership, increased self-reliance, and contributed to capacity-building and sustainability. There were some problems that needed to be addressed. Issues had emerged through the UNDP country experience, and had been analysed in the 1995 evaluation of national execution as well as by the Board of Auditors. One issue was the need for a new conceptual framework for national execution, based on a review of the concepts of execution, implementation and support. Secondly, an assessment of national capacities must be improved, through reference to

minimum requirements and practices being compiled by UNDP. Support to national execution was a third issue, in which the role of UNDP needed to be examined in terms of arrangements and funding. A fourth issue was the use of audit and accountability standards in national execution. In looking to the future, UNDP would consider the following issues: the need to provide services to governments; the need for execution by non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and direct execution. The Associate Administrator noted that the current options available for carrying out UNDP activities were proving inadequate. It was a good time to re-examine the system of national execution and design more flexible modalities, policies and procedures, on which UNDP sought the comments of the Executive Board.

127. The Director of the Office for Evaluation and Strategic Planning presented the highlights of the 1995 evaluation of national execution, which had been distributed to the Executive Board.

128. Many delegations expressed their general satisfaction with UNDP efforts to promote national execution and reiterated the importance of the modality. The speakers appreciated the contribution by national execution to ownership, capacity-building, self-reliance and sustainability. The importance of discussing national execution was stressed. Many delegations emphasized that the future of UNDP depended on its ability to make national execution a success. One delegation suggested that a more gradual approach to national execution would lead to enhanced impact of the modality. Some speakers stated that they would have liked to have been consulted on their experience with national execution. One delegation, also on behalf of two others, noted that the paper was short and analytical, a good model for other papers. That speaker suggested that the paper could have included information on the utilization of national execution and programme delivery. There was also a proposal for discussion on national execution in the regional context.

129. The proposed closer collaboration with NGOs, research institutes, civil society, and the private sector was welcomed. Several speakers stressed that both NGOs and Governments had important roles to play in execution and that the collaboration should take place with the agreement of the Government and in consultation with the latter.

130. Many delegations opposed the establishment of management support units in UNDP country offices and requested clarification on why the phasing out of such support should be an objective in the only long term. The Executive Board stressed the role of UNDP in building national capacity to undertake execution, and that UNDP should facilitate such capacity building. If support units needed to be established, the Board indicated that they should be established within the national institution concerned.

131. Most speakers expressed disagreement with direct execution by UNDP. While recognizing that country office execution could be appropriate in very specific emergency countries and circumstances, such execution was not encouraged in normal circumstances. Some delegations queried the comparative advantage of UNDP to undertake execution and stated that UNDP should not compete with the United Nations agencies. Similarly, some Executive Board members requested

further information on the provision of certain services by UNDP, in relation to the UNDP mandate.

132. Several representatives pointed out that the introduction of national execution did not eliminate external components. In that regard, many delegations supported the participation of United Nations specialized agencies in national execution through the provision of technical services. General support was expressed for the inclusion of United Nations agencies in consultations on revising national execution policies and procedures. One delegation requested information on the role of the United Nations Office for Project Services in relation to national execution. Another delegation sought clarification about the reference in paragraph 12(d) in document DP/1997/CRP.8 to UNDP country offices in carrying out development related services at the country level, in particular with reference to the role of specialized agencies.

133. The importance of capacity assessments was recognized, as well as the need for clear requirements for national execution. One delegation suggested that an evaluation be undertaken on the impact of the decrease in Government staff resulting from structural adjustment programmes on the capacity of the Government to execute programmes.

134. The key role of monitoring and evaluation was recognized. Monitoring should be continuous throughout the duration of the project, with special attention to monitoring the strengthening of national capacity. It was therefore suggested that monitoring and evaluation should be appropriately ensured by local authorities, including through inputs on training and the development of procedures and manuals. One delegation underlined the accountability of UNDP to donors, including when funds were utilized through national execution. Another speaker requested that the 1995 evaluation findings be made available in French and Spanish.

135. One delegation referred to the report of the Board of Auditors report of December 1993, which had raised the issue of the absence of performance indicators for national execution programmes. The speaker noted that in accepting to have indicators UNDP had taken an important and significant step. It was noted that the Government of the United Kingdom was considering organizing a seminar on capacity-building indicators.

136. Concern was expressed about the link between national execution and low delivery rates, possibly resulting from lengthy formulation of programmes and difficulties in implementation.

137. The reaction to the proposed new conceptual framework was mixed. Some speakers questioned whether it was necessary and others requested involvement in its development.

138. Many representatives expressed the wish to continue the dialogue with UNDP on national execution and to be involved actively in its evaluation.

139. The Chief of the Multilateral Intergovernmental Organizations Section, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, underlined the need for involvement of the entire United Nations system in discussions on

national execution. She noted that national execution differed depending on the country in which it was undertaken. The coordinating role of UNDP was a key component given the number of entities involved in arranging national execution activities. She noted that national execution was included in the regular, rather than extrabudgetary budget, of specialized agencies.

140. The Associate Administrator responded to the comments made by delegates. He noted that, where appropriate, national execution could be pursued together with technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC). Execution by NGOs would be done only with the agreement of Governments. Programme support units should not be in UNDP offices; where they already existed, they would be phased out in favour of placing the capacity for technical support with the executing authority. He underlined the need for the Government and UNDP to reach mutual agreement on the outcome of the capacity assessment. He noted that some countries in crisis would like UNDP to carry out certain types of activities in order to reinforce neutrality. There had been a linkage between national execution and delivery, in particular in the formulation and implementation procedures used by Governments. Consistency in rules and procedures must be the norm. He urged countries to consider the proposed framework in a positive light, in particular because it was to the advantage of programme countries. He explained that the present framework was based on the tripartite agreement. In response to the query raised, he noted that UNDP was able to provide services, many in relation to the implementation of loans from international financial institutions in Latin America. He noted that UNOPS could be an implementing agency for all or part of a project. As national execution was used in bilateral programmes, it would be useful if UNDP and bilateral agencies could consult to simplify procedures for the modality.

141. The Director of the Office of Evaluation and Strategic Planning underlined the need for the continued monitoring of national execution, including the incorporation of indicators. Monitoring of national execution needed to be enhanced on a continuous basis. Efforts would be made to correct the inadequacies regarding baseline data in the new programming cycle. She noted that UNDP often faced the same constraints as donor agencies. Allocation of resources to monitoring and evaluation activities needed to be assured. A seminar on monitoring and evaluation would be convened by UNDP and the World Bank in April 1997. She informed the Executive Board that an impact study related to national execution was scheduled for 1997.

142. The Director of the Division of Operational Policies and Procedures explained that the revised procedures were much simpler than existing rules. He agreed that UNDP should be flexible in applying rules. He emphasized that available evidence showed cases of low delivery with national execution but noted that in the Latin America region, there was high use of national execution, and at the same time high delivery rates. He confirmed that provisions would be made for specialized agencies to be used for national execution through the United Nations systems support for policy and programme development (SPPD) and support for technical services (STS) modalities, and that the agencies would be consulted in the revision of the procedures. In some countries, UNOPS was being used in national execution or for procurement.

143. The Executive Board took note of the conference room paper on national execution (DP/1997/CRP.8) with the comments made thereon.

C. Earmarkings for the target for resource assignment from the core (TRAC) for 1997-1999

144. The Associate Administrator introduced the report of the Administrator on earmarkings for the target for resource assignment from the core (TRAC) for 1997-1999 (DP/1997/8).

145. One delegation expressed concern with the potentially unfunded portion of TRAC resources to be assigned as recorded in the document and requested information on how the secretariat would absorb the deficit.

146. The Associate Administrator stated that the preliminary TRAC earmarkings presented to the Executive Board were calculated based on projected core contributions of $3.3 billion for 1997-1999. However, the actual assignment and release of TRACs were a function of several interrelated qualitative and quantitative factors, most notably Executive Board approval of CCFs, preparation and review of quality programme outlines in support of CCFs and estimated resources available for core programme activities. In that regard, not only were current contribution estimates lower than expected but the situation was further exacerbated by the strengthening of the United States dollar, resulting in a further reduction of some $50 million.

147. Based on current estimates with regard to available resources for the 1997-1999 period, the TRAC 1 earmarkings had already been adjusted downwards by prorating them on the basis of projected core contributions of $3 billion for 1997-1999. The actual assignment of TRAC 2 resources for the 1997-1999 period would also take into account the latest available forecast of 1997-1999 core programme resources. Therefore, the potentially unfunded portion of TRAC resources to be assigned would be accommodated in the context of future assignments from line 1.1.2 and/or further adjustments in TRAC earmarkings based on available resources. That would be done at the time that the three-year planning period rolled forward one year, and additional resources accruing to the new year to be added to the cycle were about to be released.

148. The Executive Board took note of the report of the Administrator on the earmarkings for the target for resource assignment from the core for 1997-1999 (DP/1997/8).

III. UNITED NATIONS CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

149. The Executive Secretary introduced the report on the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) (DP/1997/9) and gave an overview of its main points. He noted that the final financial figures for 1996 had been issued the day before the present meeting. There would thus be some differences in the figures presented in the UNCDF business plan made available to the Executive Board that day as compared with those shown in document DP/1997/9. He said that delivery was up to $43 million and that approvals had risen to $52 million. He

noted that UNCDF intended to maintain its level of reserves at $43-45 million, which equalled a total of two years of reserves. Those reserves were kept at a level of twice the mandatory level to ensure that UNCDF could meet its ongoing commitments for at least two years. The Executive Secretary also urged donors to increase their funding of UNCDF.

150. One delegation, also on behalf of another, thanked the Executive Director for his oral presentation and candid description of the challenges facing UNCDF. The report was a good example of how Executive Board documents should be written. It was informative and elaborated the comparative advantages of UNCDF. The description of negative elements included in the report was appreciated in that it gave the Board a complete picture. The evaluation of UNCDF after three years would lead to a decision on its future. Major donors had provided financing for three years in order to guarantee stability of resource provision. The Governments of Denmark and Sweden had increased their contributions and other countries were encouraged to join the group of donors. UNCDF could set a good example for other organizations.

151. A number of donor countries expressed interest in participating in the evaluation. One delegation appreciated the exchange of information between UNCDF and donors. Several speakers underlined the need for increased financial support to UNCDF.

152. More information on UNCDF activities in micro-financing was requested, including criteria for ensuring access to micro-credits. One speaker encouraged UNCDF to apply micro-credits as a comparative advantage and in collaboration with the World Bank. Another delegation queried whether micro-finance modalities had been taken into account in the strategy and if target beneficiaries had been assessed. One speaker requested information on the closing of micro-financing activities in Lesotho. Some delegations sought clarification about the use of local funds and eco-development. It was noted that increased activities in innovative areas, cited as 73 percent, could lead to a thin dispersal of resources.

153. The positive work of UNCDF in its attention to least developed countries was highlighted. The Fund's contribution to South-South cooperation had led to success in local development and joint activities with the Special Unit for Technical Cooperation Among Developing Countries should be intensified. Several speakers expressed support for the Fund's work in support of local governance.

154. One delegation, praising the UNCDF business plan, queried how UNCDF would speed up the process of using best practices and how it would diversify its resource base. A draft decision on UNCDF was distributed by the speaker.

155. One speaker queried whether decentralization could impact negatively on experience gained in other areas. Another delegation expressed support for decentralization, also welcoming the revised project cycle, which allowed for increased participation.

156. Another speaker commented that UNCDF interventions were still too reliant on the project approach, which should now evolve into a programme approach as part of a global planning process, including local development and micro-

financing. The complementarity of UNDP and UNCDF had not been clearly highlighted in the document, including references to how the Fund supported local enterprises and job creation.

157. One speaker requested information on whether UNCDF had considered expanding use of national experts or United Nations Volunteers specialists.

158. The Executive Secretary requested that delegations submit their questions in writing to obtain a complete response, given the time limitation at the formal session of the Executive Board. He was very grateful for the support of UNCDF expressed by programme countries during the session. He noted that in the long run UNCDF must work in the framework of the programme approach. The seminar on eco-development had concluded that difficulties existed in working within the context of increased decentralization. With regard to complementarity with UNDP, it existed not only through the country cooperation frameworks, but also through specific programming in the field.

159. With regard to the innovative areas of intervention, the Executive Secretary responded to queries raised regarding micro-financing, stating that UNCDF was finding its niche, working through banks or non-governmental organizations. In general, as a small fund, UNCDF had to take risks, in which it might sometimes see failures. He noted that UNCDF did not work directly in encouraging government support to the private sector, but sought to see the parties work closer together. He underlined the fact that UNCDF did not go into areas where UNDP was not working.

160. The Fund would continue to examine its role in eco-development, with interventions in a few countries. He noted that the project in Lesotho would not be closed but that the funding could be re-channelled.

161. Discussions with new donors would continue in an effort to diversify the UNCDF resource base. The Fund's goal was to return to the 1991 level of $48.2 million: $50 million in delivery with $50 million mobilized was the goal of UNCDF.

162. In response to queries raised, he stated that the Fund sought to make contracts with southern institutions in an effort to find new partners. UNCDF was increasing its use of national experts.

163. The Executive Board approved the following decision:

97/8. United Nations Capital Development Fund

The Executive Board

1. Welcomes the report of the Administrator (DP/1997/9);

2. Endorses the implementation of the new policy focus of the United Nations Capital Development Fund, which concentrates its activities on local governance, decentralization, participation and micro-financing;

3. Also endorses the current reorganization efforts, with a view to creating a more decentralized and effective organization and recommends that in

the monitoring and evaluation, particular attention should be given to the modus operandi of the Fund and the relationship between headquarters and the field;

4. Encourages the Fund and the United Nations Development Programme to intensify their collaboration in all relevant areas, including in the design and implementation of country cooperation frameworks, taking into account the comparative advantages of the Fund, e.g., in the field of local governance and micro-financing;

5. Requests the Fund to improve the dissemination of successful project and programme experience in order to foster replication of these successes;

6. Welcomes the commitment of a number of donor countries to support the Fund in a more predictable and assured manner and invites traditional and new donors as well as recipient countries to contribute to the Fund.

14 March 1997

IV. UNDP: FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Strategy outline for the budget

164. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Finance and Administration introduced the strategy outline for the budget (DP/1997/CRP.9), which had been requested by the Executive Board in its decision 96/41. In providing the outline, he noted the uniqueness of presenting such an outline six months prior to the Board's formal and detailed consideration of the budget. It was an opportunity that UNDP very much welcomed. It initiated an important consultative process on high-level strategy and allowed the Board to provide the organization with necessary guidance.

165. Several delegations thanked the Assistant Administrator for the outline, which provided very useful information in advance of the final review of the budget.

166. Many delegations referred to the linkage of the change management process and the budget for 1998-1999. They referred to the possible difficulties in incorporating all aspects of the change management process in the 1998-1999 budget, considering that some elements still needed to be finalized, and that the Board would take up the management of change formally only at the annual session in May 1997.

167. One delegation stated that the Executive Board had been informed previously that headquarters costs had decreased more than the costs at the country level. The figures in document DP/1997/CRP.9, however, showed the reverse and therefore needed clarification.

168. Some delegations stated that the income projection included in the paper could be optimistic in view of short-term and long-term effects of exchange rate fluctuations and the strength of the United States dollar.

169. Many delegations expressed concern that the uncertainty of future funding levels would have a direct impact on programme planning. One delegation, with reference to the "worst case" scenario indicated in par. 7 of document DP/1997/CRP.9, queried whether that scenario would affect country programmes. One delegation stated that the $3.3 billion target for resource mobilization was adopted at the time for planning purposes only.

170. Several delegations supported a zero growth budget strategy as proposed by the Administrator. Clarification was needed as to whether that was in real or nominal terms. Some delegations expressed a preference for a strategy of zero growth in nominal terms.

171. There was general support for the Administrator's innovative proposals on the collection of Government contributions towards local office costs (GLOC), and the offset of the reimbursement of income taxes that some staff members had to pay to their national Governments. Several delegations requested clarification on the proposed mechanism related to GLOC, in particular whether it would result in using programme funds to cover administrative costs. One delegation asked about the effect of applying the proposed mechanism on country offices without core programme resources. Clarification was also sought on the procedure regarding the offset of the reimbursement of income taxes.

172. Some delegations referred to earlier requests for information on the criteria used for allocating staff resources to country offices. One delegation underlined the inequalities that existed among certain country offices when comparing the size of the programmes. The priority for allocating core posts was to support the core programme. One delegation assumed that there would be a link between the general policy of the Executive Board on least developed countries and the allocation of staff resources. Another delegation stated that it was concerned that the Board would be micro-managing if it were to get involved in staffing issues for individual country offices. Decisions on staffing issues at that level should be the prerogative of the Administrator.

173. One delegation underlined that it had been impressed by the budget reductions that UNDP had introduced so far. She pointed out that most donor agencies had been undergoing similar reductions. UNDP must continue to aim for zero growth in nominal terms. More resources should be directed to programmes and UNDP should ensure that it used existing staff as efficiently as possible.

174. Several delegations recalled the provisions of General Assembly resolution 50/227, which called for the examination of more stable and predictable funding for operational activities, including through guidelines by governing bodies. The delegations felt strongly that the Executive Board should continue to discuss the topic but that in order to do so it would need more information. It was noted that the issue would be discussed at the substantive session of Economic and Social Council in 1997. It was suggested that the final budget proposals could include possible mechanisms for obtaining resources on a predictable basis and discuss the consequences of lack of funding. The proposed strategy outline was a good beginning for considering new approaches.

175. Also referring to General Assembly resolution 50/227, one delegation stated that the resident coordinator system, in particular its financing, would need to be examined in light of the overall United Nations reform effort.

176. The President informed the Executive Board that the Bureau would prepare a discussion on the follow-up to General Assembly resolution 50/227 for the annual session. He noted that the issue would be discussed at the Economic and Social Council substantive session and at the third regular session 1997 of the Board.

177. One delegation, supported by others, underlined the growing demands that the United Nations system placed on the local UNDP offices, in particular with regard to the Resident Coordinator function. In the Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (RBEC) region, local UNDP offices were often the only United Nations system presence and had many responsibilities. That delegation, supported by others, requested information for the annual session on how the roles of resident coordinator and resident representative could be reconciled, especially in offices with relatively few staff, as in the RBEC region. Another delegation underlined the need for UNDP to have strengthened country offices in the RBEC region up to a level comparable with that in other regions. He also stated that equal treatment for regional bureaux must be realized.

178. One delegation proposed that an additional staff member be trained for two years in the UNDP office of his country to enhance local office capacity. He noted that the source of data used to calculate the revised figures for core programme resources for 1997 to 1999 was that provided by the World Bank for 1994. The delegation queried whether revised figures for programme resources would be available once the final statistics of the World Bank were available. Another delegation asked that the conference room paper contain information on net programme resources regardless of the "floor". He stated that information was a key element since the RBEC region did not benefit from other resources approved in Executive Board decision 95/23. He also requested that an organizational chart be provided at the annual session incorporating the results of the change process. Another delegation requested that RBEC be renamed the Bureau for Europe and Central Asia, as adopted by some other United Nations system organizations.

179. One delegation, in reaction to an earlier intervention, stated that it did not agree that there should necessarily be parity for the respective bureaux in financial or human resource terms since the levels of responsibility differed.

180. Another delegation urged UNDP not to allow reform to affect programme delivery but rather to show improved impact and efficiency.

181. One delegation, supported by others, emphasized the importance of the presence of the Administrator during the discussion of the budget item, as well as other items considered by the Executive Board during the session. The Secretary assured the Board that the Administrator did everything possible to attend the Executive Board meetings. He had been prevented from attending the discussion of the item under review owing to the last minute rescheduling of that item.

182. The Assistant Administrator welcomed the opportunity to have a dialogue on the proposed budget outline. He underlined the need to examine the underlying principles on which the budget would be prepared. There were both micro and macro issues, including the overall resource picture, as referred to by delegations. Three consecutive downsizing exercises had taken place, and in the judgement of UNDP, the critical mass had been reached. The Administrator was therefore proposing a zero-growth gross budget in real terms, not in nominal terms.

183. With regard to the proposed mechanisms related to GLOC and income tax reimbursements, the Assistant Administrator noted that GLOC had always been an obligation of programme countries and that UNDP would further encourage programme countries to meet these obligations through the newly proposed mechanism. The proposed mechanism would not effect the total available programme resources and thus not result in programme resources subsidizing administrative activities. He also noted that UNDP had a different system from the United Nations Secretariat with regard to the handling of reimbursements of income tax.

184. With regard to staffing capacity, the Assistant Administrator stated that UNDP was aware of the inequalities in the RBEC region and was reviewing the whole subject in the context of the change management process and the 1998-1999 budget.

185. On the subject of income projections and exchange rate fluctuations, the Assistant Administrator stated that UNDP was assuming that the current parity of the United States dollar would continue. He further underlined that UNDP would not approach the Executive Board for additional funding as a result of the change process. Regarding the follow-up to General Assembly resolution 50/227, he stated that the matter needed to be followed closely through discussions over the following months.

186. The Chief of Budget stated that monetary amounts were not the best indicators to compare past budget reductions in headquarters and country offices. He noted that the net impact of currency fluctuations and inflation was very different for headquarters and country offices. He also referred to the example given of replacing international professionals by national professionals at the country level, which resulted in reduced costs, but not reduced staff capacity. Examining the relative reduction of the number of staff was therefore a much better indicator of actual reductions. Over the last three biennia, core staff at headquarters had been reduced by 32 per cent as compared with 12 per cent in country offices.

187. The Administrator informed the Executive Board that no increase was being proposed to finance the change process. He stated that the net 1998-1999 budget could be as low as the current biennial budget in nominal terms or as high as the current biennial budget in real terms, depending on the final outcome of the conditions and assumptions mentioned in paragraph 19 of document DP/1997/CRP.9. He underlined the concern that given the six years of downsizing and with change ahead, another round of serious downsizing at the present time would have serious consequences for the ability of UNDP to maintain a strong global presence on behalf of the United Nations.

188. The Administrator informed the Executive Board that the requested information on country office staffing would be available at the annual session 1997.

189. The Executive Board took note of the strategy outline for the budget for the biennium 1998-1999 (DP/1997/CRP.9) and the comments made thereon.

B. Accountability system of UNDP

190. The Associate Administrator provided the Executive Board with an oral progress report on the implementation of an accountability framework within UNDP, which was being undertaken in the context of the change management initiative. A revision to the administrative circular "Accountability, Disciplinary Measures and Procedures" had been issued that week. It provided greater clarity on disciplinary offenses and fairness relating to due process and covered the staffs of UNDP, UNFPA and the United Nations Office for Project Services. There were now two committees and a panel that could review cases during the investigation stage. Those involving accountability and recovery could be referred to the Standing Committee on Personal Responsibility and Financial Liability or to the Management Review Oversight Committee. The cases involving discrimination and sexual harassment could be referred to the Grievance Panel on Sexual Harassment. Following the investigation stage, the case could then be taken to the Disciplinary Committee. The circular contained clear information on unsatisfactory conduct which could lead to investigation, which could in turn lead to disciplinary action. Due process was clearly laid out as it applied to different categories of staff.

191. The UNDP Management Review/Oversight Committee, with the participation of the Under-Secretary-General for Oversight Services, would facilitate the process that assured effective operation of the accountability framework of UNDP. The Committee would examine a broad range of issues that came under the areas of the UNDP mandate, mission and goals; shared values; capabilities; and monitoring and learning. A wide variety of review measures would be taken into consideration.

192. The Associate Administrator informed the Executive Board that the Administrator planned to convene an informal meeting to discuss accountability, including a focus on governance aspects of the accountability framework. An introduction on the control self-assessment model and its implications for a more effective exchange between the Administrator and the Executive Board would be presented.

193. One delegation supported the proposal to hold an informal meeting during the annual session. More information on the Management Review/Oversight Committee would be welcomed. The self-assessment model was also supported.

194. The Director of the Division for Audit and Management Review informed the Executive Board that the membership of the Committee included the Associate Administrator, the Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services, and senior managers in UNDP. He served as a resource person, along with representatives from the Office of Human Resources.

195. The Executive Board took note of the oral report of the Associate Administrator on the accountability framework.

UNFPA SEGMENT

196. The Executive Director made a statement to the Executive Board in which she informed members of developments since the previous meeting in January. She mentioned continuing efforts on the follow-up to the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), including in the areas of women's empowerment and adolescent reproductive health. These included meetings that had taken place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in January 1997 on operationalizing reproductive health programmes in Africa and on improving adolescent reproductive health in sub-Saharan Africa. The Executive Director elaborated on various efforts to strengthen coordination and collaboration among United Nations agencies, including the use of Common Country Assessments. She also introduced to the Board the new Director of the Africa Division, Ms. Virginia Ofosu-Amaah.

197. The Executive Director reported that the Fund was in the process of preparing a paper on future funding requirements that she hoped to present to the Executive Board as a conference room paper at the annual session in May. She noted that UNFPA was also working on a study on absorptive capacity that would be presented at the annual session in 1998, and she thanked the Government of Denmark for the financial support it had provided to enable the Fund to carry out the study. In regard to national execution, she said that the ultimate goal was to reach 100 per cent as further national capacity was created.

198. During the discussion that followed, several delegations brought up the question of national execution, stating that they found the current figure of 30 per cent to be too low. They asked the Fund to step up its efforts to increase national execution and expressed the hope that the absorptive capacity study would be useful in presenting options for doing so. One delegation stated that the Fund should endeavour to work to a greater extent with national non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as a way of increasing national execution. One delegation, speaking for another as well, expressed its concern that resource mobilization was not keeping pace with the increasing needs in the areas of population and reproductive health. The same delegation also asked the Executive Director for clarification on why the Fund had had what seemed to be a very low profile at the recent meeting of the Commission on Population and Development. Another delegation asked for more details on how UNFPA planned to contribute to the Special Initiative on Africa.

199. In her reply, the Executive Director said that all efforts made to increase national execution must be country-specific. Levels of development and national capacity varied greatly, and it was not possible to set general rules that were valid in all situations. It was necessary to be very pragmatic if the overall goal of providing health services to everyone as quickly as possible was to be realized. Increasing national execution was tied to building national capacity, which was a goal of every UNFPA programme, but capacity-building did not proceed at the same rate in every country. One reason why the Fund's level

of national execution appeared to be comparatively low was that UNFPA procured a significant amount of contraceptive supplies for governments, which then used those supplies in nationally-executed activities. Likewise, the Fund's technical backstopping services were a valuable way of increasing national capacity, but they were not national execution. Increased execution by national NGOs was something the Fund had always supported. A recent opportunity that could help in that regard was a management training centre for NGOs that was being set up by the Economic Commission for Africa, and UNFPA would take advantage of that.

200. Resource mobilization continued to be one of the Fund's highest priorities. The Executive Director reminded delegations that the ICPD was the only international conference that had set specific goals for resource mobilization; however, the countries of the world were only half way towards reaching those goals. One aspect that UNFPA was working on was the collection of data on what developing countries were doing themselves in terms of utilizing their own resources for population and reproductive health activities. The conference room paper that UNFPA would present to the Board in May would have more information on resource needs. The paper would also consider the effects if the resource goals that had been set were not achieved.

201. The Executive Director stated that several people had mentioned to her that the Fund's participation in the meeting of the Commission on Population and Development had seemed rather minimal. She was not convinced that that was the case - UNFPA had prepared three technical papers for consideration by the Commission and had actively taken part in the discussions on them. Delegations should remember, however, that the Fund was not the secretariat of the Commission and that it participated in the deliberations on those items for which it had provided inputs. In response to further remarks by one delegation, she said that the Fund would look into ways in which it could participate more effectively in the Commission.

202. Discussing the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa, the Executive Director said that she had had discussions with the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa with a view to increasing the Fund's role, including in the mobilization of resources. The Executive Secretary had just called a meeting on the health sector in which UNFPA would actively participate. In the theme group on basic education, the Fund made contributions in terms of such cross-cutting issues as population and gender education, for example, while in discussions on food security the Fund served as an advocate for emphasizing the role that population played in helping or hindering efforts to provide everyone in Africa with adequate nutrition. The Steering Committee of the Special Initiative on Africa would be meeting the following month in Geneva, and that should provide greater opportunities for clarifying the role of UNFPA.

V. UNFPA: COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS

203. The proposed country programmes for UNFPA were introduced by the Deputy Executive Director (Programme). The Executive Board had before it for its

consideration a total of 24 new programmes, which were all based on the national priorities of the respective programme countries and had all been designed to respond to the Fund's comparative advantage in each case. She informed the Board that the Fund had been in the process, since September 1996, of revising its internal guidelines in order to increase the effectiveness and delivery of the programmes. These included guidelines on the programme review and strategy development (PRSD) exercise, on the devising of sub-programmes and projects, on implementation modalities, on procedures for monitoring and evaluation and on the efficient use of technical support services, including the country support teams (CSTs). She also reported that many of the Fund's professional staff had recently undergone training in logical framework programming techniques and thanked the Overseas Development Administration (ODA) of the United Kingdom for its support in making the training available.

204. The preparation of the more than 40 country programmes that had been presented to the Executive Board at the third regular session 1996 and the first two sessions of 1997 had been a challenging task for the Fund, and she assured members that every effort had been made to incorporate the Board's suggestions and to present the programmes in a clear and concise manner. She reminded delegations, however, that the present country programmes had been prepared some months earlier and that the improvement of the presentations was an ongoing process. The Fund was looking forward to the discussion at the annual session in May on the country programming process and on the best way of involving the Board in the design of UNFPA's programmes.

205. Commenting on the statement of the Deputy Executive Director (Programme), delegations commented that they were generally pleased with the proposed programmes and their formats and congratulated the Fund for making them available via the Internet for the first time. One delegation, speaking for two others as well, said that it supported the overall emphasis on reproductive health, the attention given to previously neglected areas such as female genital mutilation (FGM), necessary activities in the field of data collection, and the provision of needed contraceptive commodities. Those delegations found that the country programme documents were still too variable in quality and that sometimes the Fund's comparative advantage and the programme's priorities were not sufficiently spelled out. They, along with other delegations, requested a clearer sense of the breakdown of financial information according to sub-programme (what part of reproductive health expenditures, for example, would be for IEC and what part for services) and for a clearer exposition of the expected outcomes or "deliverables", difficult as that was to ascertain, and the benchmarks that would be used to measure progress. They also asked for a firmer indication of what multi-bilateral assistance was expected.

206. One delegation commented favourably on efforts to decentralize programme activities, noting that more and more resources were going directly to local levels of government and to local NGOs, and asked that more emphasis be placed on that. That delegation also urged the Fund to devote even more of its attention to its role as an advocate for goals of the ICPD and to be the prime mover in programme countries for the exchange of information and experiences on population and reproductive health services. Another delegation asked that the Fund give a clearer exposition in its country programme proposals of the comparative advantage of UNFPA in each of the programme countries. It also

requested that the Fund be more explicit about the staffing arrangements in its country offices and asked that more detail be provided about cooperation with other agencies and development partners.

207. In her reply, the Deputy Executive Director (Programme) said that as far as multi-bilateral assistance was concerned there had been an internal Fund exercise to be more realistic in evaluating the possibilities for such assistance. At the same, it was also desirable to leave some flexibility in that regard because it did happen that sometimes more multi-bilateral assistance was forthcoming than had been anticipated, often during the time when sub-programmes and projects within a programme were being formulated. The current wording in the document was also designed to allow for the possibility that core resources might be greater than forecast, thus allowing for greater expenditures in the future than could currently be foreseen.

208. The Deputy Executive Director (Programme) stated that the decentralization of programmes activities was increasingly supported by the Fund. It was the case, however, that capacity-building at the sub-national level required a lot of resources. She took note of the request for more information on the Fund's comparative niche in each programme country. New guidelines spelled that requirement out in greater detail, and the Board could expect to see that spelled out more clearly in future programme proposals. As for advocacy, there was widespread agreement that that needed to be better targeted and designed. It was also important to distinguish that advocacy took place at two levels -- at the global level, where the Fund advocated worldwide for the goals of the ICPD Programme of Action, and at the programme level, where the programme was designed in collaboration with the concerned government to help the government reach its own advocacy goals. She reiterated that the Fund would be coming to the Board at the annual session with concrete proposals on ways that members of the Board could have more systematic input in the design of the country programmes.

209. In accordance with the arrangements made by the secretariat, the country programmes for Eritrea and India were considered at the joint UNDP/UNFPA segment (see chapter VI).

Africa

210. The 12 country programmes being proposed for sub-Saharan Africa were introduced by the Director of the Africa Division. She reported that over the following five years the programmes would require a total of $110.3 million in UNFPA regular resources and an additional $29.3 million in other resources. Eleven of the countries were group "A" countries while Namibia was a group "B" country. The programmes had been designed to reflect the priorities of the countries concerned. Overall, 68 per cent of the proposed resources would be for reproductive health services and related activities. Those resources would be devoted to trying to alleviate one of the greatest challenges in Africa: the lack of availability of reproductive health services. The Fund's assistance would emphasize expanding the number of service points, focusing on rural and needy areas in particular. Many of the programmes had important elements designed to assist NGOs in providing information and/or services.

211. Given the critical importance of addressing adolescent reproductive health needs, 11 of the programmes had elements designed to expand pilot projects that had proved effective in helping meet the critical needs of that group. In those countries where FGM was prevalent, the programme would address the issue through advocacy and/or IEC activities directed to leadership groups and through the training of health personnel. The programmes would also advocate for girls' education, reproductive rights and the equality and equity for women. Activities in the area of population and development strategies would address the need to incorporate population variables and gender concerns in short- and medium-terms sectoral plans, including the need for up-to-date population data. In terms of advocacy, the programmes would work to develop advocacy partners, including NGOs and community-based and religious organizations and parliamentarian groups. The Fund's contributions would include helping to develop data that could be used in programming and in advocacy campaigns and providing training in advocacy skills.

212. In commenting on the proposed programmes, several delegations stressed the importance of human resource-building in the African context, which was one of the main requirements for enhancing absorptive capacity. One delegation asked if the Fund could consider strengthening its country offices in Africa and asked that the country programme presentations include more information on the staff available in the programme countries. The same delegation also requested clearer reference to any contemplated South-South cooperation in the programmes. One delegation complimented the Fund for increasing the amount of resources that it was devoting to sub-Saharan Africa. Several delegations welcomed the strong components addressing youth concerns. One delegation stated, however, that at times contemplated activities in that area were not adequately spelled out in the proposals nor was it clear how much commitment national governments had to such activities, which were often controversial. One delegation, speaking for two others as well, felt that it was not always clear how the Fund's proposed activities would coordinate and dovetail with those of other development partners. Another delegation welcomed the strengthening of the fight against FGM. It felt, however, that the programmes overall seemed to take too much of a "hardware" approach: in those cases in which the Fund built or rehabilitated health centres, how much training was also carried out so that the centres could be truly useful? Another delegation wondered how much any of the programmes planned to deal with difficult refugee situations that existed in many of the countries.

213. In her replies, the Director of the Africa Division stressed that the Fund had always supported South-South cooperation and was indeed reinforcing those efforts. She felt that the characterization of the proposals as taking a "hardware" approach was inaccurate in that the "software", i.e., increasing human resource capacities, was always a priority for the Fund. The Fund's most important input was training and human capacity-building. The Fund had developed a programming framework that could help to tackle the problem of FGM. The programmes would certainly focus on youth concerns and if that was not always clear it was because in the brief programme documents it was not possible to include every detail. In response to questions about refugees, the Executive Director said that the Fund was undertaking an inventory of what it was doing and evaluating how it could best operate in that area. She hoped to have a

paper providing more detail on this topic available for the Board's third regular session in September 1997.

214. In comments on specific programmes, several delegations welcomed the programme for Angola, which provided much needed assistance in a difficult situation, noting its efforts to improve overall reproductive health, including its valuable IEC component. Several delegations felt that the programme must be supported but that it needed to be followed closely so that it could be flexible in what was a very fluid situation. Some delegations wondered whether under the circumstances the proposed programme might be over-ambitious, questioning whether it was practical to attempt activities in six different provinces. Another delegation, however, felt that the six provinces were well selected but asked for more detail on how it would be coordinated with a programme of the European Commission that would focus on three provinces. The delegation of Angola thanked the Fund for the proposed programme, which it felt would help to rebuild the needed health infrastructure devastated by 30 years of war. The delegation of Brazil offered to supply expertise in a South-South context in support of the proposed programme.

215. The Director of the Africa Division reported that there was extensive cooperation and collaboration among development partners in Angola and that the programme had been formulated in cooperation with the European Commission and was designed to complement its programme. Of course the Fund would be monitoring the programme very closely and would adjust it as necessary if conditions deteriorated.

216. In comments on the proposed programme for Burkina Faso, one delegation asked for clarification on whether the country had the absorptive capacity to implement the proposals, stating that lack of capacity had been a problem in the past. Another delegation felt that the proposed programme did not adequately address past problems and felt that it would need strong efforts in order to make it work.

217. The delegation of Burkina Faso welcomed the proposed programme. It stated that implementation had been a problem in the past but that since 1995 the head of state had given the highest priority to improving abilities and this was bearing fruit - in 1996 the UNFPA programme had had an implementation rate of 86 per cent. The proposed programme's four-year cycle responded to the Government's development priorities and was in accord with the country strategy note. It would be implemented in the context of the process of decentralization that was now under way. The Government was very positive about the proposed programme and welcomed the cooperation of all its development partners. Another delegation stated that the clear position of the Government of Burkina Faso was welcome and that the Board needed to respect its assurances that efforts to redress past problems had been made in the past two years. The Director of the Africa Division felt that the delegation of Burkina Faso had responded to the concerns of members of the Board, and she could attest that the Government had taken steps to improve absorptive capacity and to implement activities.

218. Discussing the programme designed for the Central African Republic, one delegation pointed out that it would be working in very difficult circumstances and hoped that efforts would be made to build up the public sector and would not

rely on the private and NGO sector entirely. The Director stated that the UNFPA programme was focused on the public sector.

219. On the Gambia programme, one delegation wondered what were the linkages between the Population Secretariat and the National Population Commission. The Director of the Africa Division responded that the Population Secretariat, which services the Commission, had been set up to foster synergies among the different actors in the population and reproductive health sector in Gambia. The Commission was chaired by the President of the Republic; such high-level support was one of the reasons for optimism in respect of the gains that could be made in that country. The representative of Gambia stated that there was close collaboration between the Fund and the Government in his country and that advocacy efforts had been very collaborative and successful. He thanked UNFPA for the increased resources being provided to the Africa region.

220. In discussing the proposed programme for Guinea, one delegation felt that it focused too much on activities at the provincial level. The same delegation wondered why the Fund was sending staff from Dakar rather than using what was available in Conakry. The Director of the Africa Division responded that the Fund's activities focused on both the central level, with activities taking place in Conakry, the capital, and at the provincial level. The Fund maintained a country office in Conakry and used national expertise to a great extent. The regional CST was headquartered in Dakar and was used for technical backstopping as needed. The delegation of Guinea thanked the Fund, stating that the Government was firmly committed to reaching the programme's goals, which would help build up both human resources and the country's health infrastructure, producing an overall improvement in the country's reproductive health situation.

221. In commenting on the proposed Namibia programme one delegation felt that it was a very good one but questioned whether the amount of the financial resources coming from regular resources and those being sought from multi-bilateral assistance was not disproportionate. The delegation of Namibia felt that the proposed programme would complement the Government's own efforts in terms of youth and women and appreciated the emphasis that was being given to reproductive health. The reproductive health situation of young people, especially, was a great concern of the Government, and the delegation noted that the rate of school drop-outs was increasing. The delegation thanked the Fund as well as donor governments active in the country.

222. In commenting on Nigeria, one delegation welcomed the proposed programme and said that although its development agency would cooperate with the Fund in ensuring the supply of needed contraceptives, there would still be a gap that needed to be filled. In that regard, the Director informed the Board that the World Bank and Nigeria had just signed a $12 million loan agreement for the provision of contraceptives.

223. One delegation felt that the Togo programme needed to place greater emphasis on improving the status and conditions of women and should provide for greater cooperation with women's NGOs. The Director replied that the Fund was working very successfully with women's NGOs in Togo and regretted that the programme document had not made that clear.

224. On Uganda, several delegations expressed the hope that the programme was not too ambitious and did not raise hopes too high. Another delegation felt that it was important to continue the implementation of strategies that were already in place and not attempt too much. In that regard, it wondered how it was possible to train 5,000 traditional birth attendants (TBAs). One delegation wondered what support was being given to the Population Secretariat to promote coordination, given that the focal point for reproductive health for most agencies was the Ministry of Health. Its development agency had taken part in the PRSD and had found it very useful. The delegation wondered how cost-effectiveness the referral system for maternal health was. It welcomed the work that was going to be done with NGOs and felt that there was even greater scope for cooperation with them in Uganda. The delegation supported the proposed advocacy and IEC activities but felt that resistance to family planning, for example, was not as strong as the programme document had stated. One delegation wondered whether the high percentage of the total programme that was being sought in multi-bilateral assistance was justified.

225. In her response, the Director of the Africa Division assured those delegations that felt that the Uganda programme might be too ambitious that the programme responded effectively to the country's needs and had been designed in support of the Government's goals. On the issue of the referral system (RESCUER programme), she informed the Board that recent evaluations had shown much progress, and there were several reasons for optimism -- the health referral system was working well and the maternal mortality rate had declined as a result. WHO was integrating the referral system into its mother and baby care package. The Ministry of Health had incorporated the expansion of the referral system into its 5-year plan, and the World Bank was exploring the possibility of replicating the system in a number of districts. The training of such large numbers of TBAs would be accomplished by cascade training, which had worked in the past. In terms of the proposed multi-bilateral assistance, she felt that it was not unjustified in that the country was receiving a lot of bilateral assistance and several governments had expressed interest in the proposed programme.

226. Since a separate discussion on the proposed programme for Senegal had been requested, the President opened the floor to comments and questions on that programme. The representative of Senegal informed the Board that the proposed programme had been developed in close cooperation with the Government and that it responded to the country's needs and to the current process of decentralization. He said that the country was about to celebrate National Youth Week and hoped UNFPA would be taking part. In discussing the proposed programme, one delegation felt that perhaps the goals were too modest. Another delegation, however, stated that it felt the goals of the proposed programme were too ambitious and hoped that the proposed activities would not duplicate the efforts of others. Its development agency had supported the provision of contraceptives in the past, but there was a question as to how future supplies could be assured. Another delegation asked for clarification on what it felt had been the failure of the programme to introduce Norplant in the country. Another delegation said that its Government's research mission to Senegal had found a great gap between urban and rural areas in the availability of reproductive health services. What was the proposed programme planning to do about that?

227. In his reply, the UNFPA Representative for Senegal commented on the question of whether the proposed programme was too ambitious or not ambitious enough by saying that within the financial resources of $15 million that were being proposed, the proposals were felt to be within the limits of the possible. The Fund was discussing with the Government whether it should concentrate its efforts in a few regions and, if so, which ones would be most appropriate. Decentralization was well under way in the country, but there was a great need of data at the sub-national levels, including on such questions as the contraceptive prevalence rate (CPR), in order to guide and direct programmes. As a result, a new demographic and health survey was being undertaken with the support of the World Bank and USAID, and this should give a better indication of where programme efforts should be concentrated.

228. Was Norplant a failure? That was not clear; an evaluation was being conducted to see whether it had been successful or not. It should be noted, however, that other countries, such as Guinea-Bissau, had emulated Senegal's Norplant programme. USAID was supplying condoms in Senegal, while the Fund supplied injectables so those contraceptive needs at least would continue to be met. In commenting on past achievements, the UNFPA Representative reported that 14 reproductive health referral centres had been renovated under the past programme and two more were currently in the process of renovation. As part of the efforts throughout Africa to focus attention on the reproductive health needs of adolescents, the Fund would be cooperating very actively in the events of National Youth Week, including sponsoring fora on youth and population and on reproductive health questions.

229. The Executive Board approved the proposed programmes for Angola as contained in document DP/FPA/CP/173, Burkina Faso (DP/FPA/CP/187) Central African Republic (DP/FPA/CP/182), Comoros (DP/FPA/CP/171), Gambia (DP/FPA/CP/178), Guinea (DP/FPA/CP/181), Namibia (DP/FPA/CP/175), Nigeria (DP/FPA/CP/190), Senegal (DP/FPA/CP/176), Togo (DP/FPA/CP/172) and Uganda (DP/FPA/CP/177).

Arab States and Europe

230. The Director of the Division for Arab States and Europe presented to the Executive Board the proposed programmes for Albania, Lebanon and Sudan, all of which had been designed to help the Governments of those countries reach their population and development objectives. She stated that the main challenges in many of the Arab states were high maternal mortality and morbidity rates associated with limited access to reproductive health services and information and the continuance of harmful traditional practices as well as the low status of women and girls. The approach that UNFPA was taking in helping the governments of the region respond to those challenges was to upgrade the knowledge and technical skills of national staff and to intensify IEC activities that could help mitigate sociocultural constraints. In addition to strengthening government capacities, new partnerships were being formed with NGOs and the private sector.

231. The proposed programme for Lebanon would help the Government improve reproductive health services in underserved areas of the country, including those with large numbers of internally displaced populations. In Sudan, the

Fund would concentrate on 6 disadvantaged states, out of a total of 26 in the country, providing support for integrated reproductive health services and IEC as well as activities designed to improve the status and conditions of women. In response to previous comments during the Board discussion on the need to respond to refugee situations, the Director asked the former UNFPA Representative for Sudan (currently covering Albania) to provide some details on the ways in which the Fund had worked to ameliorate the reproductive health situation of the large numbers of displaced persons in Sudan.

232. The situation in the countries of central and eastern Europe was different from other regions, and those prevailing conditions were well illustrated by the case of Albania, for which the Fund was proposing a new programme. The most pressing concern throughout the region was the high rate of abortions, which was being used as a method to regulate fertility in the absence of modern contraceptives. In addition, there was a rapid increase in the incidence of STDs. Given these great needs and the Fund's limited resources, the proposed programme for Albania would focus almost entirely on reproductive health-related issues.

233. The UNFPA Representative for Albania reported that given the complex socio-economic and political situation, as illustrated by the widespread civil unrest that was taking place in the country, it was necessary to be extremely flexible in carrying out programme activities. In that regard, he reported that the Fund enjoyed very favourable working relations with the Government, other United Nations agencies and national and international NGOs, which should allow the adjustment of the proposed programme to complement the efforts of other partners once the situation had stabilized. He continued to feel optimistic that during the term of the proposed four-year programme it would be possible to meet its goals.

234. The proposed programme was welcomed by several delegations, feeling that it was well drafted and well focused and illustrated the approach that could be taken to meeting the challenges facing other countries of the region, especially the focus on reproductive health. In that regard, delegations were pleased that the Fund had set up two country offices in eastern Europe, the one in Albania and the other in Romania, each of which would deal with several countries in the region. One delegation asked for more information on the status of UNFPA activities in Armenia, which were being managed from the Albania country office.

235. One delegation asked if the Albania programme had the approval of the Parliament and Government while another asked if the Government had taken a position on the ICPD Programme of Action. Another delegation expressed the wish that the programme take maximum advantage of existing infrastructure, which was currently underutilized because of the difficult economic situation. Given the difficult situation, the delegation urged the donor community to understand the temporary needs of the region, where poverty had consequences that could have long-term deleterious effects on the reproductive health of the people. Another delegation commended the involvement of NGOs and asked for more information on how the programme was being coordinated with other bilateral and multilateral development partners.

236. The representative of Albania thanked the Fund for the work that it was doing in the country, where the new country office had just become functional, and he also expressed the appreciation of his Government to the other donors who were active in the country. He noted that the problems that had to be tackled were not just health issues but were related to social problems as well, i.e., the high incidence of abortion, the lack of family planning services and commodities, the spread of STDs and the low status of women. These were all tied to the poverty prevalent in the country, which had just been made worse by the collapse of a series of financial pyramid schemes and the current social unrest. He said that his Government would welcome any support that could be provided by donor governments or agencies.

237. The UNFPA Representative for Albania welcomed the support that had been expressed by delegations for the proposed programme. He said that they were quite right in saying that the problems in Albania were also problems in other countries of the region, the differences between them being differences of scale and magnitude not of substance. The overall aim of the Fund's activities was to help people have access to and use modern contraceptives rather than turning to abortion; that would require extensive IEC efforts in addition to the provision of services. Information campaigns needed to be carried out to combat the increase in STDs, including HIV/AIDS. As for cooperation with other development partners, he noted that field-level cooperation was very good, with regular meetings of all donor agencies, and that UNFPA was currently chairing the AIDS theme group. There were several bilateral donors in the country, and there had been some interest in supporting the UNFPA programme through the multi-bilateral mechanism. The Government of Albania was very committed to the proposed programme and to the ICPD Programme of Action, having established a National Population Committee as well as a reproductive health section within the Ministry of Health and had sponsored the first National Population Conference.

238. The Director of the Division for Arab States and Europe thanked the delegations for their comments and said that she and her staff would be happy to furnish any additional details that delegations wanted on a bilateral basis. As for Armenia, she informed the Board that there had been some problems in getting started but that the Fund had established a good working relationship with the UNDP country office and that planned activities could go forward, the provision of contraceptives to the country having already been undertaken. Two staff members, including the UNFPA Representative for Albania, who also covered Armenia, were planning a trip to Armenia to help evaluate the country's needs.

239. In discussions on the proposed programme for Lebanon, one delegation raised a number of points. It felt that the demographic statistics used in the proposed document were inaccurate and that the document neglected the contributions that other donors were making to the health sector. If the Fund was not aware of those contributions, how could it coordinate the activities that it was undertaking and how could it be sure that it was carrying out the activities that were most needed? The delegation also emphasized that the public sector needed support and hoped that that was not being neglected. Finally, it argued that the amount of money being proposed was not enough to meet the needs of the country in its post-war situation.

240. In reply, the Director said that the Fund was obligated to use official United Nations statistics, which were the best available. However, everyone realized that demographic data for Lebanon were problematic since the last official census had taken place more than 60 years previously. That was why the Fund had supported a major population and housing survey as well as a PAPCHILD survey. The data from these surveys were currently being analysed would be disseminated and used in planning programme activities. She stated that there were indeed other donors in the health sector in Lebanon but that they were concentrating their support on the rebuilding of infrastructure while the Fund was concentrating on training of service providers and the provision of needed medical equipment, supplies and contraceptives. The Fund was indeed focusing its efforts in the public sector so that the Government could build up its primary health care services to reach the underserved populations unable to afford private services. The Director acknowledged that the amount of funds being provided under the proposed programme was small in relation to the great needs. However, the UNFPA Representative and the Country Director were actively pursuing the possibility of multi-bilateral assistance and had received initial indications of interest from several donors.

241. The Executive Board approved the proposed programmes for Albania as contained in document DP/FPA/CP/180, Lebanon (DP/FPA/CP/184) and Sudan (DP/FPA/CP/194). Following that approval, the delegation of Lebanon expressed its appreciation to the Fund and to other United Nations organizations that were helping the country to rebuild. The delegation said that the programme was focusing on human resource development, which was crucial. The Government wholeheartedly supported the goals of the ICPD and the Fourth World Conference on Women and was pleased that the new UNFPA programme would help it reach its goals of improving the health of Lebanese families.

Asia and the Pacific

242. The Director of the Division for Asia and the Pacific made a brief statement to introduce the proposed programme for the Lao People's Democratic Republic. He noted that the other proposed programme in the region, the one for India, had already been discussed and approved by the Board earlier in the context of the joint segment with UNDP. The Lao People's Democratic Republic was a country that had been classified in group "A" under the Fund's new approach for resource allocation. The country had great needs in terms of improving its reproductive health and population situation, and therefore the proposed programme had components in all three of the Fund's core programme areas. As with all programmes, a major goal would be to strengthen national capacities, in this case by providing training in programme management, coordination, monitoring and evaluation. The programme would also focus on gender equality and equity and the empowerment of women and would work with such mass organizations as the Lao Women's Union and the Lao Youth Union.

243. The representative of the Lao People's Democratic Republic reported that population growth in his country was still quite high, stating that the Government would like to stabilize it at a rate of 2.4 per cent a year. The proposed UNFPA programme was in harmony with the Government's Five-Year Development Plan and with the Country Cooperation Framework that the Board had just approved for UNDP. The Government was pleased that it gave such emphasis

to capacity-building, and the Government would do its utmost to achieve the goals of the proposed programme. There was at present no UNFPA office in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, and he asked the Fund to look at the possibility of having at least one full-time staff member resident in the country. He thanked the Board for its support.

244. The Executive Board approved the proposed programme for the Lao People's Democratic Republic, as contained in document DP/FPA/CP/174.

Latin America and the Caribbean

245. The Director of the Division for Latin America and the Caribbean opened the discussion on the proposed programmes in the region by stating that the proposals for Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, the English- and Dutch-speaking Caribbean, Haiti and Peru represented a good cross-section of the population and reproductive health challenges facing the region as a whole. Although the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean had made great strides both economically and socially, there were still great inequalities and still populations with great needs in the areas of the Fund's mandate. Since resources were limited, however, UNFPA would have to carry out key strategic interventions that could really make a difference. That would be done by supporting national execution so that countries could increase their own capacities for carrying out population and reproductive health programmes and by concentrating assistance on the populations most in need.

246. The Director stated that the governments of the region had requested the Fund's assistance in carrying out advocacy efforts to build support for population and reproductive health programmes as well as support for training activities that would increase national capacity. One of the lessons learned from past activities was that UNFPA assistance had sometimes been spread too thinly and that it was necessary to concentrate the Fund's support so that it could have a measurable impact and directly reach its intended beneficiaries. At the same time, however, it was necessary to continue to support certain efforts at the central level, such as those for integrating population concerns in development strategies and, most particularly, in poverty alleviation programmes.

247. Several delegations from the region, including Antigua and Barbuda, Guyana, Jamaica and Suriname, spoke on the proposed programme for the countries of the English- and Dutch-speaking Caribbean. One delegation said that it was pleased to note that it was firmly based on the principles of cooperation and collaboration with the governments concerned. Several delegations said that they were pleased that it emphasized the needs of adolescents, especially in terms of IEC, which was in accord with national priorities, and that it supported training efforts. Several delegations mentioned that capacity-building at the national level was very important, with one delegation stating that the Fund's support would help build up institutional capacities for carrying out census activities in the year 2000. Delegations also stated that they were pleased that the programme focused on populations with the greatest reproductive health needs. One delegation felt, however, that the proposal overemphasized advocacy activities at the expense of reproductive health and

that it did not devote enough resources to population and development strategies.

248. In regards to the proposed programmes for the Dominican Republic, El Salvador and Haiti, the delegation of Brazil stated that it was important to encourage South-South cooperation with other countries in the region and that its country had had valuable partnerships with those countries in terms of training for population and development strategies and offered to continue and to augment its assistance.

249. The Director for Latin America and the Caribbean expressed her appreciation to all the delegations that had spoken, saying that she was particularly gratified with the support expressed by the Caribbean countries themselves, which indicated the very worthwhile cooperation that was going on in that region. In response to the question concerning how the resources were allocated within the sub-programmes of the proposed programme, she stated that the allocations had been worked out in collaboration with all the governments concerned and that a first draft of the proposed programme had been forwarded to all of those governments and had received their concurrence. As always, the Fund would have liked to have more resources to devote to other areas, but unfortunately those resources were not available. She said that all of the comments would be forwarded to the UNFPA country office for the Caribbean. She thanked the delegation of Brazil for its offer.

250. The Executive Board approved the proposed programmes for Cuba as contained in document DP/FPA/CP/188, the Dominican Republic (DP/FPA/CP/186), Ecuador (DP/FPA/CP/192), El Salvador (DP/FPA/CP/189), the English- and Dutch-speaking Caribbean (DP/FPA/CP/179), Haiti (DP/FPA/CP/191) and Peru (DP/FPA/CP/185). Following the approval, the delegation of Cuba expressed its appreciation to the Fund as well as to other donors that were working to improve reproductive health conditions, especially for adolescents, in the country. The delegation of Ecuador also expressed its appreciation, noting however that the new programme represented a decrease in funds from the previous programme. The fact that the general population and reproductive health indicators for the country had improved did not take into account the fact that there were many pockets of the population where conditions were much worse than the average; there were, for example, serious discrepancies between urban and rural areas. He asked that the Board keep these factors in mind as it considered future programmes and reviewed the criteria for resource allocation.

251. The delegation of the Dominican Republic thanked the Board for the programme that had just been approved. He pointed out, however, that the fact that the Dominican Republic was no longer a priority country for UNFPA assistance meant that the serious problems being faced by large segments of the population could not be addressed, especially since the Government was having to cut social expenditures in the face of difficult economic circumstances. The delegation hoped that the Board could be more flexible in taking these situations into account. The delegation of the Netherlands thanked the Board on behalf of the Dutch territories in the Caribbean. The delegation of El Salvador expressed its appreciation for the new programme, saying that it was an investment in human capital and would strengthen national capacity. The Government of El Salvador was concerned, however, with the decrease in the

resources that were available and asked the donor governments to reverse that trend. The delegation of Haiti expressed its gratitude for UNFPA assistance, which was coming at a time when the country was undergoing a very difficult transition period. The representative of Peru tabled a statement in which it expressed its appreciation for the UNFPA programme, which would help the country achieve its population and development goals, which was the country's highest priority in terms of social development. He stated that the country was pursuing a comprehensive strategy of family planning that did not in any way contravene the constitutionally-guaranteed right to life from conception. That strategy and a related national IEC campaign were reflections of the Government's firm commitment to the ICPD Programme of Action.

VI. JOINT UNDP/UNFPA SEGMENT

252. In accordance with the arrangements made by the secretariat, the UNDP country cooperation frameworks for Eritrea and India anda the UNFPA country programmes for Eritrea and India were considered at the joint UNDP/UNFPA segment.

UNDP: Country cooperation framework for Eritrea

253. The Assistant Administrator and Regional Director of the Regional Bureau for Africa introduced the first country cooperation framework for Eritrea (DP/CCF/ERI/1), which had been requested for discussion by the Executive Board. Following an overview of the CCF, she noted that the Government of Eritrea had raised some objection to the process of approval of the CCF by UNDP. The Government had included in the advisory note its own perspective, which it would have preferred to see in the CCF submitted to the Board. That perspective had been taken into account in the preparation of the CCF, but not in the form originally conceived by the Government. She had discussed the issue with the Government the previous evening, and read the text of a statement to the Executive Board as prepared by the Government:

> "UNDP assistance should concentrate mainly on capacity-building (human resources development and training, equipment, processes and procedures, regulations systems, etc.) and institution-strengthening; Eritrea wants to see a flexible programming approach and preferably to have only one programme (capacity-building), coupled with a few other minor ones (e.g., support of constitution-making, refugees, women) to allow for diversity; funds allocations should be consolidated and concentrated on a few key issues of current and long-term concerns that the Government feels are of high priority within a programme; UNDP assistance should effectively contribute to Eritrea's national development efforts without fostering any form of dependence; the ongoing bridging programme resources should be re-targeted/re-allocated to high-leverage activities but with emphasis still on capacity building; and the Government's reference to capacity-building basically include: institution capacity-building and human resources development and capacity-building."

254. The Assistant Administrator reported that there was no inconsistency in the CCF with the Government's prerogatives and that the substance had been incorporated.

255. One delegation referred to his Government's satisfaction with the work of both UNDP and UNFPA in Eritrea. The UNDP programme was on the right track.

256. One delegation, also on behalf of another, agreed with the analysis contained in the CCF regarding the development situation and with the concentration on capacity-building and human resources development as well as the approach to use local expertise as a priority. As Eritrea was a young country, they wondered whether the use of national execution would be appropriate at the present time. They underlined the need for coordination in the country by UNDP and in close cooperation with other donors.

257. Another delegation expressed support for both UNDP and UNFPA programmes in Eritrea. It was gratifying to hear that close collaboration was taking place. The United Nations community was new and small and the support of UNDP to different United Nations agencies helped in achieving complementarity in assistance to Eritrea. The first CCF was good and it was useful to have a joint presentation of it with the UNFPA country programme. Realizing that a joint document was not feasible at the present time, it would be productive to elaborate further on how the two organizations collaborated in Eritrea and how coordination on statistical development and capacity-building took place. Information on assistance to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations was also sought.

258. The President noted that the Bureau needed to discussion the methods for having joint documentation describing the activities of UNDP and UNFPA in particular countries.

259. The Assistant Administrator thanked the delegations that had supported the CCF for Eritrea. The Government was very judicious about ownership of activities in the country and about preserving its independence. The Government was in the process of setting out guidelines for international NGOs working in Eritrea. Certain areas of concentration had been identified, as elaborated in the Government's statement.

260. The Resident Representative of UNDP in Eritrea also thanked delegations for their comments. He stated that UNDP would continue to strive to work effectively in cooperation with the Government in Eritrea. National execution could be an appropriate modality, in particular since it did not exclude agency execution. Wherever possible, people wished to learn by doing rather than by watching. Coordination with the United Nations system had been exceptionally good in Eritrea. Work on the census would involve a number of United Nations agencies. An outline for a country strategy note had been approved by the Government. A minimum of three thematic groups would be formed to meet the needs of the Government.

261. The Executive Board approved the first country cooperation framework for Eritrea (DP/CCF/ERI/1), taking into account the perspective of the Government as read out by the Assistant Administrator.

UNDP: Country cooperation framework for India

262. The Assistant Administrator and Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific introduced the first country cooperation framework for India, 1997-2001 (DP/CCF/IND/1). The Resident Representative in India also made introductory remarks.

263. Speakers thanked the secretariat for arranging a joint UNDP and UNFPA presentation and an informal discussion on United Nations system cooperation in India. Many delegations commended the excellent coordination of United Nations operational activities and the positive relations of UNDP with bilateral donors in India. The strong leadership of the Resident Coordinator was cited. Several representatives stated that the experience in India was an example for other countries to follow with regard to inter-agency coordination. The increased attention of UNDP to social sectors was laudable. A recent positive example cited by one speaker was the role played by UNDP in encouraging the inclusion of the social sector in the agenda of the India Development Forum. A Country Human Development Memorandum would be prepared for the next meeting of the Forum. Several speakers supported increased cooperation with programmes of bilateral aid agencies as those efforts had been successful in the past.

264. Some speakers, while recognizing that UNDP had undertaken major efforts to streamline its activities, pointed to the still apparently large number of areas of involvement, without identification of a particular niche for UNDP. It was thus possible that there could be a scattering of efforts, given the size of the country and the relatively small CCF budget. The implementation strategy of the programmes also appeared centralized and UNDP was encouraged to explore ways to explore innovative ways of involving the private sector and grass-roots beneficiaries in its programmes. One delegation queried whether the CCF included a technical cooperation among developing countries component.

265. Information was requested on the linkage between the CCF and the UNFPA country programme and the United Nations System Position Statement on India of January 1997, in particular with reference to the role of specialized agencies. An explanation of how lessons learned were reflected in present and future cooperation was also sought. One delegation requested information on the resource allocation to the thematic areas described in the CCF and on the scope and causes of a decline in programme delivery.

266. UNDP was requested to include socio-economic indicators for the CCFs on the front page of the document. Both UNDP and UNFPA were requested to provide information on staffing in country offices in the CCFs and country programmes.

267. The representative of India expressed his gratitude to the Executive Board for its support to the CCF. The framework was built on 25 years of experience. The period of the fourth country programme had been a time of transition, from the project to the programme approach and in a reduction of long-term experts, increased national execution and greater involvement of non-governmental organizations. In order to understand the context in which the CCF was prepared, several events needed to be mentioned: the reform process in India since 1991, with its resultant high economic growth rates; the development policies of the new government; and the Ninth Five-Year Plan, which coincided

with the CCF. The framework drew on three major Government objectives: the overall Government strategy to generate growth with equity; universalization of social services by the year 2000; and the national policy towards democratic decentralization. Steps had been taken to improve programme management in the context of the first CCF. Those terms included better management and review, enhanced planning, and the prioritization of certain projects. The new programmes of the CCF dealt with more complex issues which required new and innovative thinking, finding new mechanisms for implementation and working in remote geographical areas. The Executive Board must thus give adequate time to the programme in order for it to implement its new programme directions.

268. The Executive Director of UNFPA expressed her appreciation for the work of the Resident Coordinator in India.

269. The Assistant Administrator supported the proposal to include socio-economic indicators in CCFs. With regard to staffing, he explained that the inclusion of a staffing table might not be feasible, as the situation changed during the time period, with core posts prescribed in the budget strategy and more transient posts funded through extrabudgetary resources.

270. The Resident Representative noted that the Government had requested the ten programmes WHICH ARE included in the CCF as they were in support of national programmes. It was hoped that additional resources could be raised through third-party cost-sharing. Technical inputs from specialized agencies would be required in relation to national execution. Specialized agencies were involved in all of the programmes in the CCF. References in paragraphs 16 to 18 in the document in particular highlighted the areas in which specialized agencies were involved, in food security, primary education and in health support programmes. Specialized agencies were involved in the sectoral inter-agency groups as well. Linkages with bilateral programmes would continue to be identified. He assured delegations that there was a firm connection between inter-agency collaboration in India and the CCF and UNFPA country programme. There had been numerous lessons learned, which the document only outlined. Resource allocations to the individual programmes had not yet been finalized pending further consultations. Constraints on delivery were attributable to a number of causes and were being addressed. The Resident Representative acknowledged the support of the delegation which had referred to the UNDP role in the International Development Forum and noted that the human development profile was being prepared for the June meeting of the Forum.

271. The Executive Board approved the first country cooperation framework for India (DF/CCF/IND/1).

UNFPA: Proposed country programme for Eritrea

272. The Director of the Africa Division opened the discussion on the proposed programme for Eritrea by thanking the Government for its cooperation during the PRSD exercise in developing the Fund's first comprehensive programme for the country. The UNFPA Representative for Eritrea introduced the programme by explaining that the country's development priorities centred on overcoming the legacy of 30 years of warfare. That affected all United Nations programmes being carried out in Eritrea -- all of the development partners were new to the

country. Everyone was learning at the same time, which meant that sometimes things did not go as smoothly as they did in situations where there had been the opportunity to build up years of experience. There was, however, a truly collaborative process going on between the Government and all United Nations organizations, including UNFPA, and that made it a very rewarding country in which to work.

273. The proposed programme would have two major focuses: on outreach to women and adolescents and on helping the country develop a much-need demographic database. The country suffered from such a serious shortage of demographic information that no one was sure whether the total population was 2.5 million or 4.5 million. The fund would be working closely with Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) in helping to carry out the groundwork for a national census that was scheduled for 1998. In terms of support for reproductive health, UNFPA would concentrate its work in the two provinces bordering the Red Sea, along the entire length of the country. Other donors were concentrating their support in other parts of the country. One of the areas of concern in the area of reproductive health was the widespread practice of female genital mutilation (FGM). Because of the wide variance in cultural practices concerning that practice, the Fund felt that the best way to address it was to work through NGOs like the National Union of Women.

274. Several delegations commented that they were pleased with the proposed programme and welcomed the proposed UNFPA assistance for Eritrea. Several delegations also noted that their development assistance agencies had been involved in the PRSD exercise in Eritrea and thought that that was a very good development, indicative of the good cooperation that prevailed generally. Some thought, however, that the cooperation between UNDP and UNFPA could have been spelled out more explicitly in the respective papers. One delegation wondered about the low absorptive capacity of the Ministry of Health and how the programme would deal with that situation. Along the same lines, another delegation asked about the difficulties of carrying out national execution in such a young country. That delegation also wondered whether the family planning goals were not too ambitious given the context. One delegation wondered whether the great needs in the country would not require supplementary assistance in addition to the programmed $6.8 million that was being proposed.

275. One delegation asked about the role of NGOs in the country: Were they increasing in number? How strong were they? What was their relationship with the Government? Another delegation commented on a statement that the UNFPA Representative had made about the increase in sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and asked how that was tied to the growth of prostitution, especially in port cities. The delegation therefore wondered whether thought had been given to coordinating activities with neighbouring Djibouti to help combat the spread of STDs. That might be an important avenue for IEC campaigns. Another delegation asked how the programme planned to address such questions as repatriation, urbanization, and the demographic effects of war. It noted that preparations for the census had started late. One delegation reminded the Board that the proposed programme, like all programmes, must be "country-driven" and it was the Eritrean Government's right and prerogative to implement it the way that it felt best. The same delegation felt that in the case of the country

programmes generally, and this one in particular, not enough scope was being given to possible areas of South-South cooperation.

276. The UNFPA Representative thanked the delegations for the large number of positive comments concerning the proposed programme. On the question of NGOs, she reported that strengthening the position of NGOs in the country had not been a priority of the Government although this was a subject of much discussion in government circles. There were only a limited number of NGOs in Eritrea, and those were all large national associations of functional groups such as the National Union of Women, the National Union of Youth and Students, and the National Union of Workers. UNFPA worked with all of them, but there were no international NGOs with operational activities in the country.

277. The Representative stated that it was true that the absorptive capacity of the Ministry of Health had been questionable in the past, mainly because of the lack of trained staff and its overall newness. However, the formulation of the country's primary health care policy in 1996 had led to many workshops and the consolidation of expertise within the Ministry. Therefore, she felt that capacity had been greatly improved and that the Ministry would be able to carry out its role in the proposed programme effectively. In that regard, she reported that 100 per cent of the programme would be nationally executed. This was something that the Government insisted upon, and UNFPA agreed with that approach. Even though national execution might take more time to get off the ground, in the end the benefits were clear, and there were beneficial synergistic effects that would be noticeable in other areas as well.

278. The UNFPA Representative said that it was true that census preparations had started late, but they were now well advanced and the cartographic work in preparation for the census was actually ahead of schedule. HIV/AIDS continued to be a great concern and the Fund was cooperating with the Government and other development partners in trying to do something about preventing its spread. The Government was in fact coordinating its efforts in the prevention of STDs with the Governments of both Djibouti and Ethiopia. As to the possibility that the goals in terms of family planning were overambitious, she reported that the current contraceptive prevalence rate (CPR) of 4 per cent was indeed quite low; however, there was obviously much latent demand for modern contraception because the country had been faced with stock-outs of needed contraceptives twice during the past year. The Fund was cooperating, especially, with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to try to prevent recurrences of that situation and to make contraceptives more generally available, which should lead to an increase in the CPR.

279. The Executive Board approved the proposed UNFPA programme for Eritrea as contained in document DP/FPA/CP/183.

UNFPA: Proposed country programme for India

280. The Director of the Division for Asia and the Pacific reported to the Executive Board that the UNFPA programme that was being proposed for India would be the Fund's largest. He thanked the Government of India for its support and said that the proposed programme had been developed in full consultation with the Government and other development partners. The UNFPA Representative for

India introduced the proposed programme by explaining that India was classified as a group "A" country under the Fund's new approach for resource allocation: Although the country had made great strides in a number of areas, there were still large discrepancies in levels of attainment in such a populous and diverse country. UNFPA was concentrating its efforts in 40 districts in 6 states in addition to continuing support at the central level, especially in terms of helping the country to improve its capacity for logistics management and quality assurance of contraceptive supplies. Social marketing of contraceptives was stagnating in India, and the Fund would provide help to reinvigorate that initiative.

281. The Representative stated that the proposed programme would work to strengthen collaboration with NGOs in India - 10 per cent of total programme funds had been reserved for NGO activities. The Fund was also very aware of the need to get performance indicators of the activities undertaken. The Representative concluded by stating that, as was generally known, India was undergoing a series of economic reforms that were resulting in great growth in the private sector. He felt, however, that it was very important to continue to support public sector needs as a way of reinforcing the country's social contract by helping the large numbers of people living below the poverty line who could not afford private services.

282. In commenting on the statement of the UNFPA Representative, several delegations mentioned that the kind of cooperation being carried out in India could serve as a model. One delegation noted the increasing role that the private sector was playing in the Indian economy and society and urged UNFPA to involve the private sector more in its programme. The same delegation also wondered whether the large Indian movie industry would be a good source of "Goodwill Ambassadors" for population activities in the country. Another delegation noted that the document on the proposed programme mentioned "infrastructure building" and wondered what role UNFPA would play in that and whether such a role was appropriate. The same delegation asked to what extent technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC) would figure in the programme. Another delegation was pleased that the Fund was cooperating with UNICEF and WHO in the country and wondered what plans there were for working with other partners such as the European Commission and the World Bank.

283. In its comments on the proposed programme, one delegation questioned the lack of mention of male involvement in reproductive health activities and of treatment of reproductive tract infections (RTIs) at the primary health care level. In this regard, several delegations wondered how the rising rate of HIV infections in the country was being addressed. One delegation wanted to know more on how coordination with other donors would be carried out at the district level. The same delegation felt that some important elements of the Indian population situation, including migration, had not been addressed in the proposed programme. Several delegations agreed with the request made by one delegation that information on the staffing of the country office would be welcome. Another delegation stressed the valuable role that NGOs could play, including in South-South exchanges.

284. The representative of India expressed the appreciation of his Government for the proposed programme and the work that UNFPA was doing in the country. He

reported that the Government fully supported the goals of the ICPD and was, in the spirit of the ICPD, working to decentralize its reproductive health programme and to improve the quality of care that was being provided. In response to the suggestion that the private sector be more closely involved, he reported that private companies had played a large role in the Government's recent polio inoculation campaign for children and that perhaps that could serve as the model for activities in the area of reproductive health as well. In response to the question of one delegation, he said that the Fund would be providing support for improving the infrastructure support in some districts, but that the assistance would also be used for training and other activities so that the improved facilities could be utilized effectively. The Government of India was assuring that there was no overlap or duplication between the functions carried out by different development partners. In response to questions about the rising problem of HIV/AIDS in the country, he reported that the Government, with the assistance of the United Nations system under UNAIDS, was working to develop a coherent strategy for dealing with the problem.

285. The representative of India summarized what he thought were the strengths of the proposed UNFPA country programme for India - its focus on decentralization, the active involvement of NGOs, and the strong women's component. Operationalizing the programme would be a challenge, but its success was a high priority for the Government. He concluded by thanking the Executive Board for its support.

286. The Executive Director thanked the members of the Executive Board for the support they had expressed for the proposed programme and the Government of India for its strong commitment. She also expressed appreciation to the UNDP Resident Representative for the active role he had played in coordinating the efforts of all United Nations agencies in his role as Resident Coordinator. She informed the Board that the Fund would endeavour to include more information in future country programme presentations about the staffing of its country offices and on planned management of the programme. She said that the Fund had worked with the movie industry in India in the past and would continue to do so. The Fund also supported television soap operas that had a role in developing positive attitudes on the status of women and on girls' education. In the area of South-South cooperation, UNFPA had been using the expertise available in India for a number of years, including such institutions as the Indian Institute of Population Sciences (IIPS) in Mumbai. India was considering joining the Partners in Population and Development initiative, and the Fund was looking at possible Centres of Excellence in the country. Concerning male involvement, she said that the Fund would work to improve the situation, both in terms of information, education and communication (IEC) activities and in terms of the provision of services.

287. The Director of the Division for Asia and the Pacific pointed out that more and more collaboration between development partners was being undertaken at the time of the programme review and strategy development (PRSD) exercise. The Fund was consulting with other partners, especially the World Bank, on how to better coordinate HIV/AIDS programmes in the country. The Director reported that issues concerning migration and urbanization were being taken up under the population and development strategies programme area.

288. The UNFPA Representative for India said that there had been private sector involvement in the Fund's programmes in the past, in, for example, the tea-growing industry. UNFPA was working with chambers of commerce, large industrial groups and the railways to get them involved in programmes that reached out to employees. In commenting on the movie industry, he pointed out that there was a need inside the industry itself for greater efforts on raising the awareness of population, reproductive health and gender issues. As for male involvement, he stated that the Government's positive attitudes towards a more comprehensive reproductive health approach should help to increase the participation of men but there was, indeed, a lot of work to be done in that area, including working with NGOs. Combating RTIs would be carried out at the district level, and that was one area where volunteer community health workers were proving to be very helpful. UNAIDS had a programme in India, but combating HIV/AIDS, which was seriously underestimated in the country, was going to be a challenge for all United Nations agencies as well as the Government and other development partners.

289. The Executive Board approved the proposed UNFPA programme for India as contained in document DP/FPA/CP/193.

VII. OTHER MATTERS

290. One delegation, also on behalf of several others, requested that information on the percentage of core contributions to UNDP, UNFPA, UNIFEM and UNCDF, which were applicable to the 20:20 concept, be presented at the annual session 1997 or at the third regular session 1997.

291. Another delegation requested that an informal briefing on UNDP activities in relation to the International Year for Volunteers be held at the annual session 1997.

292. One delegation stated that a procedural decision on enhancing internal oversight mechanisms had been withdrawn. The speaker requested that the Administrator invite the Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) to present to the Executive Board at the annual session 1997, the report of the Secretary-General on OIOS and to provide comments on the applicability of the findings contained in the report to UNDP, UNDP-administered funds, and UNFPA.

293. Another delegation suggested that comments on UNDP country cooperation frameworks and UNFPA country programmes could be provided to their respective Secretariats in advance of Executive Board sessions in order for the responses to be provided at the session, thus leading to more strategic and focused discussion by the Board. Comments by programme countries on the adoption of the CCFs or country programmes for their own country could be made in advance of the adoption, so that others could react to their comments. Support was expressed for the proposal, which would enable a more interactive process and greater dialogue in the Board.

294. The President noted that programme countries had been active in responding to queries regarding their countries.

Further elaboration of follow-up to ECOSOC 1995/56:

295. The Director of the Emergency Response Division introduced a conference room paper (DP/1997/CRP.10), which, in responding to questions raised at the Executive Board's first regular session 1997, gave a description of the role of UNDP in humanitarian emergencies and provided views and suggestions on the coordination of humanitarian assistance.

296. Several delegations commended UNDP for the revised paper. The paper was an excellent description of current practice and how UNDP saw its roles and responsibilities in a system-wide context that required close inter-agency collaboration. The concrete examples included in the paper added to its effective presentation. Several speakers underlined that the paper should be considered as a "living document", in the context of ongoing discussions. Others emphasized the value of the consultative process that had resulted in the revised paper.

297. One speaker, on behalf of the African Group, praised UNDP for its work in Africa, particularly in Mozambique. UNDP had a leading role in coordinating assistance, for which the African group was thankful. The importance of transition to normalization was underlined. Another speaker thanked UNDP and donor assistance for work in his country.

298. Many delegations underlined the system-wide relevance of the issues covered in the paper, and noted that the upcoming Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) would finalize the recommendations and conclusions to give to the Economic and Social Council. One delegation, also on behalf of another, requested information on how the paper would serve as an input in the inter-agency process.

299. Several delegations emphasized that capacity-building was a niche of UNDP, which meant that the organization should develop a policy for capacity-building in countries that had faced emergencies and/or societal breakdown. It was noted that the paper referred to UNDP strengthening capacity in those areas, an effort that would require practical and analytical work which should be done in collaboration with other agencies in order to clarify the division of labour.

300. One speaker stated that the paper raised the point that development interventions in the initial stages of an emergency and development-friendly relief programmes were essential for longer-term sustainability and effective crisis response. UNDP had a unique and important role to play at all stages of an emergency, but most particularly in the transition period between crisis response, post-emergency recovery and longer-term development. Collaboration with partners during emergencies, and with donors, was crucial to coordinated, mutually reinforcing and sustainable programmes.

301. With regard to coordination, it was noted that the paper made a good case for UNDP involvement from the early stages of an emergency, on occasion performing an early-warning function and having the structure in place to

respond before other organizations arrived. However, the original orientation of UNDP was not crisis response, and the focus of many UNDP staff was not normally crisis response. When the options for coordination would be examined at the Economic and Social Council, several factors would need to be balanced, including the need to avoid duplicating the existing resident coordinator function, to ensure close consultation and cooperation with development agencies to ensure complementarity, and recognition that humanitarian assistance was a different function from development coordination. Further information was sought on the capacity of UNDP to fulfil the functions described in the paper and how it would prioritize those functions, in particular with regard to rehabilitation programmes for resettled internally displaced persons and returning refugees. It was suggested that a report be submitted to the Executive Board in 1998 on the use of the Memorandum of Understanding as a tool of coordination, with specific reference to tangible progress in coordinating with other United Nations partners.

302. The strategic framework received a number of comments. It was noted that the relationship among humanitarian strategies must be better clarified so that the United Nations system would avoid competition in favour of having a single consolidated strategy. The need for clear terms of reference on coordination in the field was underlined. The role of UNDP vis-à-vis the Department of Humanitarian Affairs needed more definition generally and specifically on the nature of UNDP interventions with regard to de-mining. Concerning funding, several speakers requested more information on the use of the target for resources assignments from the core (TRAC) line 1.1.3 and on the use of trust funds. A query was raised on whether the change process in UNDP would affect the use of line 1.1.3 and the functions of the present Emergency Response Division. One delegation requested that the Executive Board consider the follow-up to the guidelines for the use of line 1.1.3 at a future session.

303. Several delegations favoured the proposal of UNDP for an expanded consolidated inter-agency appeal process (CAP). One delegation noted that expanded CAPs could challenge the international community to find resources to match the expansion, and the importance of prioritizing projects within appeals for donors. The expanded CAP was identified as one that incorporated rehabilitation, recovery and other development needs, until other medium- and long-term resource mobilization mechanisms such as round-table and Consultative Groups meetings could be organized.

304. Information on the role of the resident coordinator in humanitarian activities and on performance measurement was sought. One speaker emphasized the need for certain personal qualities in resident coordinators, such as energy, competence and relevant previous experience, noting that candidates could come from any organization.

305. Several delegations requested further information on the role of UNDP and the involvement of the United Nations system in de-mining, in particular on the use of resources. One speaker queried whether UNDP de-mining activities were coordinated with the Department of Humanitarian Affairs Emergency Demining Trust Fund and whether there were de-mining activities in Rwanda. Another delegation noted the convening of a conference in early March 1997 on anti-personnel land mines and the related problems in the reconstruction of post-conflict countries.

306. Several speakers underlined the importance of formulating policies that combined relief with development and for clear definitions of those policies. One delegation sought the views of UNDP on the monitoring of policy objectives.

307. The Director of the Emergency Response Division stated that his office would continue a close dialogue with the Executive Board on the contents of the paper as well as on the results of the Economic and Social Council substantive session for 1997. He noted the lessons learned by UNDP in several countries in recent years. The Board had empowered UNDP in the area of capacity-building, an area where UNDP would continue to monitor its progress and adapt to present and future development challenges in bridging relief and development. There would be further discussion of TRAC line 1.1.3. The Emergency Response Division was the focal point for the use of resources within that line. Strategic frameworks had been endorsed by IASC as well as the Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ). The Inter-Agency Working Group in Rome accepted the approach and the comprehensive overview of working groups as well as the expanded CAP and strategic frameworks. The IASC meeting on 17 March would clarify the emerging consensus. A recent output of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD/DAC) Task Force on Peace, Conflict and Development Cooperation also cited the need for a strategic framework. He noted that the Emergency Response Division would continue to be part of the Office of United Nations System Support and Services (OUNS) in the proposals of change management. The roles of the various bodies in de-mining needed to be clarified.

308. The President informed the Executive Board that further consultations on the subject would be held prior to the Economic and Social Council substantive session for 1997.

309. The Executive Board took note of the revised conference room paper on the follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolution 95/56 (DP/1997/CRP.10) and the comments made thereon.

United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)

310. The President informed the Executive Board that there would be a more in-depth discussion on UNIFEM at the annual session 1997.

311. The UNIFEM Director introduced the response to the recommendations of the external evaluation of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (DP/1997/CRP.11). She noted that the response would be incorporated in the strategy and business plan, to be discussed at the annual session. Informal consultations would be held between the second regular and annual sessions.

312. Many delegations thanked the UNIFEM Director for her presentation and for the written response to the external evaluation. While most speakers welcomed the comments made in the response to the evaluation, some commented that it could have been more analytical and could have included some critical comments. One speaker requested information on how the response to the evaluation would be included in the discussion at the annual session.

313. Many speakers looked forward to the annual session, when the UNIFEM business plan would be presented, and hoped to receive a copy of the plan as early as possible. The plan would be a useful tool in assessing the effectiveness of the Fund's work and in identifying funding gaps. It would also help the Executive Board to understand the planning process in UNIFEM. There was a need to identify the comparative advantage of UNIFEM in relation to the Secretariat and inter governmental mechanisms which dealt with gender in development issues.

314. Several speakers underlined the key role that UNIFEM could play in disseminating best practices in promoting gender equality and facilitating the agreements reached at the Fourth World Conference on Women. One delegation welcomed in particular the initiatives mentioned in the conference room paper, such as financial support to women's groups, the opening of its knowledge fund to others, and reporting on the state of women. That delegation also supported the need for UNIFEM to balance advocacy, gender mainstreaming and direct implementation of projects. Reports on the resumption of renewed operational procedures and a separate information strategy for UNIFEM would be welcomed.

315. One delegation, in welcoming the response to the evaluation, hoped that the outcome of the exercise would increase options for women and opportunities for the political empowerment of women. It would be useful to analyse the experience gained that could be developed and disseminated to larger groups. The work of UNIFEM in the context of the mandates given to it by the General Assembly and the Fourth World Conference on Women would be considered at the annual session. Two speakers noted that the role of UNIFEM in assisting UNDP to increase its gender activities could be further examined, given the limited resources of UNDP targeted to the gender area.

316. Some delegations stated that UNIFEM should not have access to UNDP funds. One delegation noted the findings in the evaluation which warned against a "co-mingling" of funds. One delegation stated that more innovative methods of resource mobilization should be explored.

317. One speaker, on behalf of the African Group, underlined its appreciation for the efforts of UNIFEM to respond to the evaluation recommendations. The Group cited the critical role UNIFEM played in enabling women to have access to economic resources and to exert greater control over their lives. The Fund must prioritize its activities, given limited funding, and in particular stress poverty eradication.

318. The UNIFEM Director thanked the Executive Board for its comments. She noted that the response to the evaluation was based also on the Board's previous comments and the mandates given to UNIFEM at the Fourth World Conference on Women. She reiterated that UNIFEM had shifted its focus in recent years; the fund's focus was now on bringing about systemic change that will lead to women's economic and political empowerment. In order to be focused and effective, UNIFEM would concentrate on three thematic areas: strengthening women's economic capacity as entrepreneurs and producers; ensuring gender tolerance with the aim of increasing women's participation in decision-making processes; and promoting the realization of women's rights and the elimination of violence against women. UNIFEM would use five strategies to implement the empowerment agenda: building

the capacity and leadership of women's organizations and networks to enable them to take advantage of new opportunities; leverage political and financial support for women; forge new synergies and partnerships between women's organizations, governments, the UN and the private sector; undertake pilot projects to test innovative approaches to women's empowerment; and building a knowledge base by documenting and disseminating ways and means of empowering women. UNIFEM is working with other United Nations organizations especially at the country level, through its Regional Programme Advisers.

319. The Board took note of the response to the recommendations of the external evaluation (DP/1997/CRP.11) and the comments made thereon.

Reserve for Field Accommodation

320. The Administrator gave an oral progress report on the management and accountability actions that had been taken with respect to the Reserve for Field Accommodation (RFA). The in-depth review and investigation into activities of the RFA had been an ongoing process and had been before the Executive Board since July 1996. The Division for Audit and Management Review had completed its internal investigation and had issued its report. In view of the interest of the Executive Board in the matter and his commitment to transparency, he had agreed to make copies of the summary of the findings available to delegations on a strictly confidential basis for their own use through the Office of the Administrator. He was equally committed to ensuring that staff were accorded every fair opportunity to address any questions related to them. For that reason, details regarding acts or omissions of staff could not be disclosed at the present time. It was expected that with the several cases involved, the next phase of due process would require some weeks. Ten cases involving misconduct or performance were under way, and a further six cases were still under consideration. The previous Chief of Field Housing Section had been summarily dismissed.

321. The Administrator gave a short overview of the history of the RFA and the undertaking of construction projects in nine countries. Based on the DAMR findings to the present time, it appeared that UNDP had paid between $3 million and $6 million more than it should have paid for the construction of common premises and housing. The figures were an estimate pending the outcome of the review of payments and services to contractors and negotiations with the Joint Consultative Group on Policy (JCGP) partners.

322. He highlighted a number of lessons learned from the experience, which included the need for specialized knowledge and skills for certain positions, ensuring that roles and responsibilities were clearly understood by those exercising certification and approval authorities, ensuring that approved decisions were appropriately implemented, and improving the joint decision-making process with JCGP partners.

323. The Administrator reviewed the management actions that had been taken to prevent recurrences and which had been previously presented to the Board. In line with the Executive Board's recommendation of January 1997, a procedure had since been developed to dispose of the housing.

324. The Administrator assured the Executive Board that the investigation into the RFA had no linkage with the relationship of UNDP with the host countries where the construction had taken place. The findings and investigation related only to UNDP staff members involved and to the outside contractors who had taken part, raising no implications with regard to any public sector organizations of the host countries. The investigation did not have a bearing on the UNDP-assisted programmes in those countries.

325. Several delegations thanked the Administrator for the oral progress report. Many underlined the need for transparency and requested that they be kept closely informed regarding the RFA. Other speakers identified the need to address UNDP managerial structures and competence in relation to the situation. One delegation stated that it was a matter for the entire organization for which the responsibility rested with the Administrator.

326. In commenting on various aspects of the case, several queries were raised, including the need to know what had become of the overspent money, the role of the Office of Internal Oversight Services in the investigation, and the years covered by the incident and the percentage of total turnover of the RFA.

327. One speaker stated that the actions taken by UNDP to address the situation and to avoid future mismanagement were encouraging. There must be implementation of lessons learned and the roles and responsibilities of all involved staff must be clearly understood, in particular certifying staff, especially at the country level. In addition, monitoring should be insured, and decision-making should be carried out jointly with the JCGP partners. The organization should proceed judiciously with the implementation of controls, including oversight. The delegation hoped that UNDP would have success with the disposal of housing and that the sales should be beneficial to UNDP.

328. Another delegation expressed the view that the situation had gone on for a very long time and he underlined the view expressed by others, that there was a broader question of oversight involved. It was also noted that the Executive Board had recently examined the issues of control and oversight in relation to the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), in which the financial oversight of UNDP had been involved. That delegation requested information regarding the views and experiences regarding oversight performed by UNDP senior managers. He also requested information on when the move to common premises would commence, hoping that it would begin soon, given the legislation adopted by the General Assembly.

329. The Administrator thanked the Executive Board for its comments and responded to the queries raised. He noted that the Office of Internal Oversight Services was being kept fully informed on the situation and its services were being used in connection with the external phase of the investigation. He was not in a position at the current time to comment on any deliberate actions to deprive UNDP of funds since that question was the primary subject of the external investigation. A number of changes had been made in the UNDP accountability framework and additional ones were contemplated in the context of the change management process. The incident was unusual, perhaps unprecedented, in UNDP. The Administrator underlined the need for a full and fair investigation in which no category of staff was exempt from review. The matter

of where the money had gone was under investigation. However, UNDP was determined not to reach any premature conclusions.

330. The Administrator stated that the issues involved in the situation needed to be discussed openly. It needed a complete response in order to prevent future recurrences. As Administrator, he was ultimately responsible for anything that happened during his tenure. He assured the Executive Board that he and the Associate Administrator had pursued the matter rapidly and transparently as soon as information had been made available to them. The matter would continue to be pursued until all the aspects of the issue had been resolved and a thorough investigation had been completed. It was not within his authority to refer to penal consequences.

331. The Director of the Division for Audit and Management Review informed the Executive Board that the years covered by the investigation were 1988 to 1995. Prior to those years, activity in the Reserve had been minimal. With reference to the query about the range of $3 million to $6 million cited in the opening statement, he informed the Board that the cause for overpayment was the time lag in construction (e.g., delays of three to four years) in which the budget had been increased, duplicate payments made, and the performance of various contractors investigated. Negotiation with JCGP partners had also taken place over that period. The range of $3-6 million was wide, but that estimate was the most accurate that could be made at the present time. By the end of the investigation, there would be a more precise figure. The sum of $3 million to $6 million was approximately 12 per cent of construction costs in the Reserve, which totaled about $52 million. It was difficult to answer the question posed by one representative regarding the number of countries involved in the overpayment without prejudicing the outcome of the investigation. The Board would receive information on that issue when it got to the point where it would not cause future problems.

332. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Finance and Administration said detailed information on the history of the situation was available in previously issued documentation. Additional action had been taken on general oversight and control functions, including the creation of a new financial and policy control unit in the Division of Finance. The gap in the certifying process needed to be filled and training conducted to ensure that the people who were certifying officers understood their functions well. General oversight existed in both internal and external areas. The area of common premises involved both housing for UNDP and other organizations and common premises. It was decided that housing proposals would no longer be pursued. As explained at the first regular session 1997, UNDP would not use its resources again for that function.

333. The Associate Administrator informed the Executive Board that the freeze in building common premises was discussed at the JCGP General Meeting in November 1996. Further action would take place pending the appointment of more highly qualified technical units. The JCGP would meet next on 7 April and decide on the status of the freeze.

334. In response to a query, he stated that UNDP was pursuing joint premises in situations where it was not a question of direct acquisition of property. That

trend was continuing and would be taken stock of at the upcoming JCGP General Meeting. UNDP would proceed wherever opportunities arose, preferably through rental or premises provided by the Government. The issue of management oversight was part of the investigation and could not be commented on further.

335. The Assistant Administrator referred to the preference that Governments provide free premises or construct premises with their own resources. With regard to oversight, he wished to underscore that it was UNDP that had identified the problem and, on the basis of the information received, information had been made available to the United Nations Board of Auditors for further study and work, then turned over for review by the internal oversight mechanism.

336. The President informed the Executive Board that the Administrator would present a progress report at the annual session. The Bureau would also follow up on the issue. If crucial information became available, the Bureau would call for a briefing for delegations in New York or return to the matter at the annual session.

337. The Executive Board took note of the oral report of Administrator on the Reserve for Field Accommodation.

Report on the follow-up to Executive Board decision 97/1

338. The Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) presented an oral report to the Board on the follow-up to decision 97/1 in which the Board had endorsed the membership of the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board in the UNICEF/WHO/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health (CCH), which was to take the place of the UNICEF/WHO Joint Committee on Health Policy (JCHP). Following the adoption of decision 97/1, the President of the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board had communicated that decision to his counterparts at the Executive Boards of UNICEF and WHO. The Boards of those two bodies had in turn endorsed the proposed new arrangements. The secretariats of the three organizations were discussing ways of accomplishing the transition from the former JCHP to the new CCH, given that the JCHP still had items for consideration on its agenda, and on the terms of reference of the new body. The Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) informed the Board that there was a potential problem in scheduling the first meeting of the CCH and that there seemed to be possible differences in the interpretations of the three organizations on the transition from the JCHP to the CCH. The Fund would apprise the Board of further developments at the annual session in May and would circulate the proposed terms of reference as soon as they were available.

339. The President informed the Board that the regional groups had been asked to propose a country from each region to nominate the UNFPA representatives to the new CCH. These countries would choose a representative and an alternate, who would then serve in their personal capacities. The regional groups had recommended Antigua and Barbuda, Netherlands, Russian Federation and Zambia. The Asia and Pacific group had not yet chosen a country and asked that it be allowed to forward its choice to the Bureau, to be endorsed in the name of the Board. The President then asked the Board to approve the choices.

340. One delegation stated that it was important to circulate the new terms of reference once available and that it might be wise to involve the World Bank in the discussions as well. Another delegation noted that for the JCHP, the practice had been for the Executive Boards of UNICEF and WHO to endorse the actual representatives, once the curricula vitae of those persons had been circulated, and not just the countries that would choose the representatives. The delegation understood that this was an exceptional situation given the time-frame of establishing the new body but wondered what the proposed dates of the first meeting of the CCH were and whether that would allow time for the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board to confirm its choices at the annual session.

341. The Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) replied that the dates originally set for the last meeting of the JCHP would fall during the time of the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board's annual session in May. The secretariat was currently trying to see if it would be possible to reschedule that meeting and to see if the first meeting of the CCH could be held immediately after. If the meeting were moved to a later date, then it would be possible to circulate information about the UNFPA representatives at the annual session and to seek the Board's endorsement. The Board then requested the President to communicate with the President and Chairman, respectively, of the Executive Boards of UNICEF and WHO to help facilitate the selection of more tenable dates. The Board approved the nominations of Antigua and Barbuda, Netherlands, Russian Federation and Zambia to choose representatives of the Executive Board on the new UNICEF/WHO/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health and authorized the Bureau to approve a country from the Asia and Pacific region, with the nominations of all representatives and alternates to be confirmed at the annual session. The Board also approved that the President of the Executive Board should serve as an ex officio member of the CCH.

Proposed revision of UNFPA financial regulations

342. The Director of the Division for Finance, Personnel and Administration introduced a proposed revision to UNFPA financial regulations as contained in document DP/FPA/1997/6. A new regulation was required in order for the Fund to establish stockholdings of essential contraceptive products under the Global Contraceptive Commodity Programme, as established by Executive Board decision 96/3. The Programme had been set up to provide essential buffer stocks of contraceptives to facilitate prompt response to urgent and emergency requests for contraceptives from developing countries. The ready availability of stocks was necessary to avert potential disruptions in contraceptive supplies and to avoid the costly use of air freight. Under current regulations, it was not possible to keep stocks at the required level.

343. During the discussion that followed, delegations welcomed the proposed revision as a way of making the Global Contraceptive Commodity Programme fully operational. Some delegations asked for updated information on the functioning of the Programme, and the Director informed them that to date the Fund had received requests from eight countries for contraceptives under the Programme, worth about $500,000. That should be put into the context of the Fund's total provision of contraceptives during a year, which varied from about $30 million to $50 million. She informed the Board that a fuller report on the Programme

would be forthcoming in the context of the Executive Director's Annual Report, which would be presented to the Board at the annual session in May.

344. The German delegation informed the Board that due to a law in its country, its approval was contingent upon approval by the Federal Auditors. It saw no problem with the proposed revision, but it had not yet received the formal ruling. Therefore, the proposed revision of the UNFPA Financial Regulations as contained in document DP/FPA/1997/6 was adopted with the stipulation that approval of the German delegation was subject to clearance by the Federal Court of Auditors.

97/7. Revision of UNFPA Financial Regulations

The Executive Board

Approves the inclusion of a new regulation 14.7 in the UNFPA Financial Regulations and Rules under Article XIV - "Internal Control":

"*Regulation 14.7* In conformity with Executive Board decision 96/3, UNFPA may procure and hold stocks of essential contraceptive products in order to promptly respond to emergency requests for assistance. The inventory value of these stock holdings shall be shown in the accounts as an asset."

14 March 1997

97/10. Overview of decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its second regular session 1997

The Executive Board

Recalls that during the second regular session 1997 it:

ITEM 1: ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Approved the agenda and work plan for its second regular session 1997 (DP/1997/L.2/Rev.1) as amended;

Agreed to the following schedule of future sessions of the Executive Board in 1997 and 1998 subject to approval of the Committee of Conferences:

Annual session 1997	12-23 May 1997
Third regular session 1997	15-19 September 1997
First regular session 1998	19-23 January 1998
Second regular session 1998	20-24 April 1998
Annual session 1998	8-19 June 1998 (Geneva)
Third regular session 1998	14-18 September 1998

Agreed to the subjects to be discussed at the annual session 1997 of the Board, as listed in table 3 of the annex;

UNDP SEGMENT

ITEM 2: COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS

Adopted decision 97/9 of 14 March 1997 on guidelines for improving the implementation of regional cooperation programmes;

Approved the following regional cooperation frameworks taking into account the comments made thereon:

First regional cooperation framework for Africa (DP/RCF/RBA/1);

First regional cooperation framework for Asia and the Pacific (DP/RCF/RAP/1);

First regional cooperation framework for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (DP/RCF/REC/1);

Approved the following country cooperation frameworks:

I

First country cooperation framework for Eritrea (DP/CCF/ERI/1);

First country cooperation framework for Ethiopia (DP/CCF/ETH/1);

First country cooperation framework for Mauritania (DP/CCF/MAU/1);

First country cooperation framework for Namibia (DP/CCF/NAM/1);

First country cooperation framework for Uganda (DP/CCF/UGA/1);

II

First country cooperation framework for Bhutan (DP/CCF/BHU/1);

First country cooperation framework for India (DP/CCF/IND/1);

First country cooperation framework for Laos (DP/CCF/LAO/1);

First country cooperation framework for Mongolia (DP/CCF/MON/1);

First country cooperation framework for Papua New Guinea (DP/CCF/PNG/1);

III

First country cooperation framework for Croatia (DP/CCF/CRO/1);

First country cooperation framework for Romania (DP/CCF/ROM/1);

First country cooperation framework for Uzbekistan (DP/CCF/UZB/1);

First country cooperation framework for Latvia (DP/CCF/LAT/1);

First country cooperation framework for Poland (DP/CCF/POL/1);

IV

First country cooperation framework for Colombia (DP/CCF/COL/1);

First country cooperation framework for Panama (DP/CCF/PAN/1);

V

Took note of the extension of the following country programmes:

Extension of the fifth country programme for Haiti (DP/CP/HAI/5/EXTENSION I);

Extension of the sixth country programme for Kenya (DP/CP/KEN/6/EXTENSION I);

VI

Took note of the first cooperation framework for technical cooperation among developing countries (DP/CF/TCDC/1) with comments made thereon;

VII

Took note of the note by the Administrator on assistance to Afghanistan (DP/1997/7);

Took note of the format and timing for review of the new programming cycle (DP/1997/CRP.7);

Took note of the earmarkings for the target for resource assignment from the core for 1997-1999 (DP/1997/8);

Took note of the note on national execution (DP/1997/CRP.8) with the comments made thereon;

ITEM 3. UNITED NATIONS CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

Adopted decision 97/8 of 14 March 1997 on United Nations Capital Development Fund;

ITEM 4. UNDP: FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Took note of strategy outline for the budget 1998-1999 (DP/1997/CRP.9) with comments made thereon;

UNFPA SEGMENT

ITEM 5: UNFPA: COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS

I

Approved the assistance to the Government of Angola (DP/FPA/CP/173);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Burkina Faso (DP/FPA/CP/187);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Central African Republic (DP/FPA/CP/182);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Comoros (DP/FPA/CP/171);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Eritrea (DP/FPA/CP/183);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Gambia (DP/FPA/CP/178);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Guinea (DP/FPA/CP/181);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Namibia (DP/FPA/CP/175);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Nigeria (DP/FPA/CP/190);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Senegal (DP/FPA/CP/176);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Togo (DP/FPA/CP/172);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Uganda (DP/FPA/CP/177);

II

Approved the assistance to the Government of India (DP/FPA/CP/193);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Lao People's Democratic Republic (DP/FPA/CP/174);

III

Approved the assistance to the English-speaking Caribbean countries (DP/FPA/CP/179);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Cuba (DP/FPA/CP/188);

Approved the assistance to the Government of the Dominican Republic (DP/FPA/CP/186);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Ecuador (DP/FPA/CP/192);

Approved the assistance to the Government of El Salvador (DP/FPA/CP/189);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Haiti (DP/FPA/CP/191);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Peru (DP/FPA/CP/185);

IV

Approved the assistance to the Government of Lebanon (DP/FPA/CP/184);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Sudan (DP/FPA/CP/194);

V

Approved the assistance to the Government of Albania (DP/FPA/CP/180;

ITEM 6: OTHER MATTERS

Took note of the report on follow-up to the Economic and Social Council resolution 95/56 (DP/1997/CRP.10);

Took note of the response to the recommendations of the external evaluation of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (DP/1997/CRP.11) with the comments made thereon;

Took note of the oral report on the Reserve for Field Accommodation;

Took note of the oral report on the accountability system of UNDP;

Took note of the oral report on follow-up to Executive Board decision 97/1: UNICEF/WHO/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health;

Approved the nominations of Antigua and Barbuda, Netherlands, Russian Federation and Zambia to represent the Executive Board on the new UNICEF/WHO/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health and authorized the Bureau to approve a nomination from the Asia and Pacific region, with the nominations of all representatives and alternates to be confirmed at the annual session; also approved that the President of the Executive Board serve as ex officio member of the Committee.

Adopted decision 97/7 of 14 March 1997 on the revision of UNFPA Financial Regulations.

14 March 1997

ANNEX

EXECUTIVE BOARD OF UNDP/UNFPA TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR 1997

Table 1. First regular session 1997 (13-17 January 1997)
(5 working days)

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
1				ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
	Official (DP/1997/L.1)	A	{	Provisional agenda, annotations, list of documents
	Official	A	{	Report on the third regular session 1996
	Official	I	1/2 day {	Decisions adopted by the Executive Board in 1996
	CRP	I	{	Matters relating to the rules of procedure, documentation and functioning of the Executive Board
	CRP	A	{	Annual work plan 1997 for UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board
				UNFPA SEGMENT
2				COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS
	Official	A	1 day	Country programmes
3				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	Official	I	1/2 day	Audit reports
4	Official	A	1/2 day	COORDINATION IN HEALTH POLICY AND PROGRAMMING
				UNDP/UNFPA SEGMENT
5				HARMONIZATION OF PRESENTATION OF BUDGETS
	Official	A	1/2 day	Harmonization of presentation of budgets and accounts

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
1				ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
				UNDP SEGMENT
6				COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS
	Official	A	1/2 day	Country cooperation frameworks and global/regional cooperation frameworks
7				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	Official	I	{	Audit reports
	CRP	I	{ { {	Implementation of decision 96/40 on management, accountability and reserve for field accommodation
	CRP	I	1/2 day { {	Additional information on cost segments at UNDP headquarters
	Oral	I	{ {	Report on the accountability system of UNDP
8				UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR WOMEN
	CRP	I	1/2 day	Follow-up to decision 96/43
9				OTHER MATTERS
	CRP	I	1/4 day	Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolution 95/56

Abbreviations: A = action; CRP = conference room paper; and I = information.

Table 2. Second regular session 1997 (10-14 March 1997)

(5 working days)

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
1				ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
	Official (DP/1997/L.2)	A	{ {	Provisional agenda, annotations, list of documents
	Official	A	{ {	Report on the first regular session 1997
			{	UNDP SEGMENT
2			1½ days { {	COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS
	Official	A	{ {	Country cooperation frameworks and regional cooperation frameworks
	CRP	A	{ {	Format and timing for review of the new programming arrangements (96/7)
	Official	I	{ { {	Earmarkings for the target for resource assignment from the core (TRAC) for 1997-1999
	CRP	I	½ day	National execution
3				UNITED NATIONS CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT FUND
	Official	A	½ day	United Nations Capital Development Fund (including strategy and business plans)
4				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

	CRP	A	{
			{
			½ day {
				Outline of overall strategy for the budget for the biennium 1998-1999 (96/41, para. 4)

	Oral	I	{ {	Report on the accountability system of UNDP

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
				UNFPA SEGMENT
6	Official	A		COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS
7				OTHER MATTERS including:
	Oral	I		- Report on Reserve for Field Accommodation
	CRP	I	2 days	- Revised report on follow-up to ECOSOC resolution 95/56
	CRP	I		- Response to the recommendations of the external evaluation of UNIFEM
	Official	A		- Proposed revision of UNFPA Financial Regulations
	Oral	I		- Report on the UNICEF/WHO/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health

Abbreviations: A = action; CRP = conference room paper; and I = information.

Note: Informal consultations on UNDP Change Management held during the session.

Table 3. Annual session 1997 (12-23 May 1997)
(10 working days)

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
1				ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
	Official (DP/1997/L.3)	A	{	Provisional agenda, annotations, list of documents/work plan
	Official	A	{	Report on the first and second regular sessions 1997
	Official	A	{	Rules of procedure: report of ad hoc open-ended working group
				UNFPA SEGMENT
2	Official		{	REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR 1996
		I I I	1½ days {	- Programme priorities - Statistical overview - Regional overview
3	Official	I	½ day	- Evaluation activities
4	Official	A	½ day	WORK PLAN FOR 1998-2001
5	Official	A	1 day	PROGRAMMING PROCESS
6	Official	A	½ day	INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY
				UNDP/UNFPA SEGMENT
7	Official	I	½ day {	Reports of UNDP and UNFPA to the Economic and Social Council
2 & 8	Official	I	{	Reports of UNDP and UNFPA on internal oversight
				UNDP SEGMENT
8				ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATOR
	Official	A	{	Introduction by the Administrator
	Official	A	{	Main programme record, including reporting on special funds (7 parts)
	Official	I	{	United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for Africa

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
	Official	I	{	Assistance to the Palestinian people
	Official	I	2½ days[a]	Evaluation
	Official + CRP	A	{	Change management
	Official	I		Report of the Joint Inspection Unit
	Official	I	{	Statistical annex
	CRP	I	{	Resources
9				COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS
	Official	A	½ day	Country cooperation frameworks and regional cooperation frameworks
10				COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION PROGRAMME
	Official	I	½ day	UNDP information and publication policy (96/22)
11				UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR WOMEN
	Official	A	½ day	United Nations Development Fund for Women (95/18)
12			{	FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	CRP	I	1 day {	Report on the accountability system of UNDP
13			{	UNITED NATIONS OFFICE FOR PROJECT SERVICES
	Official	A	{	Report on the United Nations Office for Project Services (96/33)
14			½ day	OTHER MATTERS

Abbreviations: A = action; CRP = conference room paper; I = information; and ICPD = International Conference on Population and Development.

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[a] Timing includes one day special event on poverty eradication to be held on Tuesday, 20 May 1997.

Table 4. Third regular session 1997 (15-23 September 1997)

(5 working days)

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
1				ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
	Official (DP/1997/L.4)	A		Provisional agenda, annotations, list of documents
	Official	A	½ day	Report on the annual session 1997
	CRP	I		Outline for Executive Board work plan 1998
				UNDP SEGMENT
2				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	Official	A		Budget estimates for the biennium 1998-1999 - 96/41, para. 4 - (including detailed costs of publication and of their distribution - 96/22)
	Official	A	1½ days	Revised budget estimates for the biennium 1996-1997
	Official	I		Annual review of the financial situation 1996
	Official	I		Activities of Inter-Agency Procurement Services Office
	Official	I		Subcontracts awarded and major equipment ordered
3				UNOPS: FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	Official	A		Budget estimates for the biennium 1998-1999
	Official	A	½ day	Revised budget estimates for the biennium 1996-1997
	Official	I		Audit reports

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
4				COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS
	Official	A	½ day	Country cooperation frameworks and regional cooperation frameworks
		A		Revised global cooperation framework (97/5)
				UNFPA SEGMENT
6				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	Official	A	1½ days	Biennial budget estimates
	Official	A		Annual financial review, 1996
	Official	I		Implementation and monitoring of technical support services arrangements
	Official	I		Evaluation of UNFPA training activities
7	Official	A	½ day	COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS
8				OTHER MATTERS

Abbreviations: A = action; CRP = conference room paper; I = information; and UNOPS = United Nations Office for Project Services.

Note: Review of field visits will be taken up in informal consultations during the session.

Part three

ANNUAL SESSION

Held at United Nations Headquarters from 12 to 23 May 1997

I. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Introduction

1. The President, Mr. Hans Lundborg (Sweden), opened the session. He informed the Executive Board that the Bureau had met three times since the second regular session and they discussed the outcome of the second regular session 1997, Executive Board field visits in 1997 and the agenda for the annual session.

2. The Administrator welcomed members and observers to the annual session and gave an overview of the main items to be taken up by the Executive Board. He also noted that for the first time the Board session would include a special event, to be held on 20 May, with the theme of poverty eradication.

3. The Executive Board approved the provisional agenda as contained in document DP/1997/L.3 and Corr.1:

Item 1.	Organizational matters
	UNFPA segment
Item 2.	UNFPA: Report of the Executive Director for 1996: programme priorities and regional overview
Item 3.	UNFPA: Evaluation activities
Item 4.	UNFPA: Work plan for 1998-2001
Item 5.	UNFPA: Programming process
Item 6.	UNFPA: Information and communications strategy
	UNDP/UNFPA segment
Item 7.	Reports to the Economic and Social Council
Items 2 and 8	Internal oversight and accountability
	UNDP segment
Item 8.	UNDP: Annual report of the Administrator and related matters
Item 9.	UNDP: Country cooperation frameworks and related matters
Item 10.	UNDP: Communication and information programme
Item 11.	UNDP: United Nations Development Fund for Women

Item 12. Financial, budgetary and administrative matters

Item 13. United Nations Office for Project Services

Item 14. Other matters

4. The Secretary of the Executive Board noted that the conference room paper on funding had not yet been issued and would be discussed at informal consultations during June 1997.

5. The Executive Board agreed to the revised work plan as distributed by the secretariat. Two informal meetings would be held: on 21 May, a briefing by UNDP for non-governmental organizations and Executive Board members; and on 22 May, an informal briefing on the International Year of Volunteers.

6. The Executive Board approved the report on the first regular session 1997 (DP/1997/6) and that on the second regular session 1997 (DP/1997/12) without comment.

7. The Executive Board approved the text of the report of the annual session on item 7: Reports to the Economic and Social Council, as orally amended.

8. During the session, the President informed the Executive Board that the Administrator, Mr. James Gustave Speth, had been reaffirmed by the General Assembly for a second four-year term as Administrator. Many delegations congratulated the Administrator on his reappointment.

9. The Executive Board agreed to the following schedule of future sessions in 1997 and 1998 subject to the approval of the Committee on Conferences:

Third regular session 1997	15-19 September 1997
First regular session 1998	19-23 January 1998
Second regular session 1998	20-24 April 1998
Annual session 1998	8-19 June 1998 (Geneva)
Third regular session 1998	14-18 September 1998

10. The Executive Board agreed to the subjects to be discussed at the third regular session 1997 of the Board, as listed in the annex to decision 97/20.

11. The Administrator, the Deputy Executive Director and the President made closing remarks.

Rules of procedure for the Executive Board of UNDP and UNFPA

12. The President introduced the draft rules of procedure for the Executive Board of UNDP and UNFPA (DP/1997/13). He informed the Board that the draft rules of procedure had been drafted by an ad hoc open-ended working group, chaired by Ms. Cecilia Rebong (Philippines), that had held seven meetings in 1996 and three meetings in 1997.

13. The draft rules of procedure were adopted without comments.

14. One delegation expressed gratitude that the rules of procedure had finally been adopted. With regard to rule 16, the delegation was of the view that undue weight had been given to the interpretation of General Assembly resolution 50/227.

15. Another delegation thanked the Chairperson of the working group for her leadership and the delegation of Morocco for initially introducing the item for consideration by the Board.

UNFPA SEGMENT

II. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR 1996: PROGRAMME PRIORITIES AND REGIONAL OVERVIEW

A. Report of the Executive Director for 1996

16. In her introductory statement to the Board, the Executive Director highlighted certain activities that UNFPA had undertaken during 1996. She reported that the Fund had made substantial progress in operationalizing the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) guided by such Executive Board decisions as 95/15 on core programme areas and 96/15 on the allocation of resources. The overall concerns of the Fund continued to be efforts to improve the effectiveness of the programmes in responding to country needs and to enhance internal oversight and accountability. In that regard, the Executive Director reported that she had undertaken actions to strengthen country offices and had established the Office of Oversight and Evaluation, reporting directly to her. She reported that, with the assistance of the United Kingdom, many UNFPA staff had been trained in logical framework techniques to help in the design and monitoring of the Fund's programmes. She detailed certain activities that had taken place in the three core programme areas of reproductive health, including family planning and sexual health; advocacy; and population and development strategies. She also touched on recent activities in the area of reproductive health in emergency situations, and she emphasized efforts the Fund was making in sub-Saharan Africa as part of the Special Initiative on Africa.

17. The Executive Director stated that although the Fund's resources had exceeded $300 million for the second year in a row the total was slightly lower than in 1995. That meant that programmable resources had declined slightly from 1995 to 1996 and the percentage of total expenditures required for the administrative and programme support services (APSS) budget had increased slightly. There had been a notable increase in government execution of programme activities from 1995 to 1996. She informed the Board that the Fund had suffered a significant cashflow problem in 1996 in that over 20 per cent of the Fund's total pledges were still outstanding at year end. She also discussed the resource situation in relation to the commitments that had been made at the ICPD for population and reproductive health programmes: developing countries had largely met their goals but international assistance from donor countries had faltered. That situation had serious consequences that were discussed in a conference room paper that UNFPA had prepared for the Board. She emphasized

that the figures were not immutable; it was still possible to take the actions needed to improve the situation. She mentioned that one possibility being explored by UNFPA was to encourage agreements between lenders and debtor countries that would allow for a portion of national debt to be excused if local currency was used for population and reproductive health programmes.

18. The Executive Director informed the Board about some of the initiatives that the Fund was undertaking with other United Nations partners, including the inter-agency Task Force on Basic Social Services for All, which she chaired. She stated that the Fund was fully supportive of the Track 1 reform measures being carried out by the Secretary-General. She updated the Board on the status of the WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health, saying that draft terms of reference were being prepared by the secretariats of the three organizations concerned and would be presented to the Board. The Executive Director also proposed to the Board that it would be appropriate and useful to carry out a programme review of the implementation of the ICPD on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the conference -- an "ICPD + 5" -- in 1999.

19. In commenting on the report of the Executive Director for 1996, several delegations congratulated UNFPA on producing a comprehensive and informative report and commended the Fund on its efforts in implementing the goals of the ICPD Programme of Action. Many welcomed the focus on the core programming areas and the importance given to adolescents, women and gender. Several delegations did, however, feel that the report should be more analytical and succinct, focusing on the effectiveness of programmes and activities and their achievements, including the benefits derived by the stakeholders.

20. Delegations welcomed the steps that UNFPA was taking in such areas as management reform, introduction of the logical framework process, increased decentralization and partnerships with non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The work of UNFPA in the inter-agency task forces, especially that of the Basic Social Services Task for All, was particularly noted, as well as the Fund's involvement in the UNAIDS programme. It was felt that the work of UNFPA would be further enhanced by its inclusion in the Coordinating Committee on Health.

21. In her reply, the Executive Director acknowledged the comments on the report and indicated that every effort would be made to produce a more analytical report the following year, focusing on what had been achieved, what needed to be done and the constraints that remained. She felt that the training in the logical framework approach to programming, in which stakeholder analysis was taken into account, would be beneficial in helping develop measurements of programme impact. UNFPA was working hard to develop such indicators in all the sectors in which it worked.

22. Although the establishment of the Office of Oversight and Evaluation was welcomed, one delegation questioned the rationale behind having one office with responsibility for two discrete activities. The Executive Director acknowledged the distinction and said that it was one that the Fund kept clearly in mind. She also informed the Board that although the majority of evaluations of Fund activities would continue to be undertaken by the managers of those activities, a greater use of independent evaluations would be undertaken as part of oversight activities.

23. In their discussions on reproductive health, several delegations noted that the shift from family planning to the broader concept of reproductive health was an incremental process and congratulated UNFPA on its practical approach in addressing that shift. However, many delegations felt that UNFPA should bear in mind the importance that family planning had with regard to reduction in maternal mortality and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), including HIV/AIDS, and in addressing Safe Motherhood initiatives, post-partum and abortion care and quality-of-care issues. Efforts to reduce the incidence of STDs, including HIV/AIDS, should not be dealt with in isolation. One delegation noted that rapid population growth was still one of the major challenges in many countries and requested that UNFPA activities should be conducive to slowing population growth and that programmes should take into account the sociocultural aspects of the countries involved. One delegation sought clarification on the meaning of the phrase "family planning within the context of the reproductive health approach" and how this would relate in terms of projects and expectations. Others noted that in addressing reproductive health issues, other aspects should be taken into account, among them, the status of women, concentration on women living in rural areas, household composition, and involvement of local government institutions.

24. The Executive Director explained that most countries had accepted the reproductive health concept and were working towards operationalizing it in their programmes. She noted that in developing programmes UNFPA followed the population policies of the countries themselves and always remained conscious of the need for programmes to be culturally sensitive. She reiterated that one of the goals enunciated by the ICPD was that of population stabilization and, in so doing, the emphasis was on individual choices, decision-making and needs. She noted that Safe Motherhood was a part of the reproductive health process and that UNFPA was participating with WHO, UNICEF and The Population Council on the Safe Motherhood initiative. She stated that unsafe abortion was also a reproductive health question and should be addressed as a public health issue. The Executive Director explained that UNFPA was working closely with UNAIDS in most countries and that in some countries UNFPA served as the chair of the HIV/AIDS theme groups. She highlighted plans to develop activities designed to combat STDs, including HIV/AIDS, in all reproductive health programmes and noted that guidelines would soon be issued in that regard.

25. Many delegations commended UNFPA for its activities in the area of adolescent reproductive health but urged the Fund to collaborate with other partners in carrying out those activities. One delegation requested that activities in that area should take into consideration the role of the family. The Executive Director noted the joint initiative undertaken by UNFPA and the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) on adolescent reproductive health and the production of a report that including essays written by young people. Those essays showcased the need of young people for access to services, their concern over the lack of information they received from parents, and their desire that their voices be heard. The paper, which would not be a UNFPA position paper but rather the expression of the young people themselves, would be launched in July. She also noted the joint programmes that the Fund was carrying out with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in the area of adolescent reproductive health..

26. Some delegations expressed appreciation for the focus that UNFPA had given to the question of reproductive rights and expressed their appreciation for the Fund's collaboration with the Commission on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). There was a request for additional information on how UNFPA was addressing those issues internally. The Executive Director welcomed the remarks on the Fund's work with CEDAW and gave her assurance that UNFPA was committed to gender equity and equality, women's empowerment and reproductive rights. She indicated that that was an area of priority attention for the Fund and that gender concerns were integrated into all UNFPA programmes. She informed the Board of the work of the Fund on an agreement to determine how reproductive rights would be addressed by the Human Rights Treaty Body organizations. She recognized that more needed to be done on the institutional side and assured the Board that that would be taken into account in future programmes.

27. The issue of female genital mutilation (FGM) was raised, and its linkage as a reproductive rights issue was welcomed by many delegations. Some delegations highlighted the positive experience in Uganda in reducing the incidence of FGM. Others requested information on the constraints in other countries, the extent to which studies had been undertaken, and the response that UNFPA had had in launching activities against this practice. The Executive Director noted that public discussions were being held on FGM issues and that several countries in Africa were looking at the Uganda experience and developing similar activities. She informed the delegates of the activities of the British Broadcasting Corporation in London in producing a programme to highlight the adverse effects of FGM and of the joint programme of UNFPA, WHO and UNICEF on FGM that was launched earlier in the year.

28. Several delegations welcomed the conference room paper on the role of UNFPA with populations affected by disasters (DP/FPA/1997/CRP 2) and the positive steps taken by UNFPA with regard to providing reproductive health services in emergency situations and its collaboration with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in that regard. One delegation noted that the subject was an important concern in Africa and commended UNFPA for its activities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. One of the delegations, however, questioned the need for the conference room paper. The Executive Director explained that, because of the large increase in the number of requests and in the activities that were being carried out, she had thought it advisable to bring the Board up to date. She noted the collaboration of UNFPA participation with UNHCR and the International Committee of the Red Cross in providing emergency assistance in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

29. One delegation highlighted the reproductive health and population problems being experienced in the countries with economies in transition, among them the need to expand opportunities for women and to increase their role in society and of the problems generated by the worsening economic situation. The delegation also noted that in those countries, unlike many other parts of the world, a major concern was that of low birth rates not high growth rates and requested that that be taken into account in UNFPA programme activities. The Executive Director assured the delegation that UNFPA programmes in those countries were aimed at reducing abortion, which was currently being used as a method of family

planning, as well as in reducing maternal and child mortality. Promoting the health of women was another priority area for UNFPA in those countries, as it was in all countries.

30. Several delegations called on UNFPA to work more closely with other partners in the United Nations system in carrying out its programmes, as well as with the non-governmental and private and commercial sectors. The Executive Director reiterated a number of activities that UNFPA was undertaking jointly with other agencies. She noted the need for an integrated approach in overall programming to avoid duplication and the important role that the Resident Coordinator should play in that regard. She informed the Board that UNFPA was in the process of revising guidelines to help the Resident Coordinator assistance in that role. Part of the process would be developing common data systems and a common country assessment strategy. The Executive Director also noted UNFPA's increased collaboration with NGOs and its concerted efforts in seeking partnerships with the private and commercial sectors. She mentioned a recent meeting with the Rotary International in New York, which could result in some joint collaborative efforts.

31. One delegation requested information as to how UNFPA was preparing its staff to deal with the new approaches to reproductive health services, advocacy and FGM. The Executive Director explained that the Fund had launched extensive training and retraining programmes in these areas for staff at headquarters and in the field, and a performance assessment was being undertaken to determine how staff were addressing those issues.

32. One delegation noted that the programme areas of population and development strategies and advocacy deserved priority attention and requested that emphasis be placed on the need to further strengthen national capacity in those areas. The Executive Director noted that efforts were under way on the study on absorptive capacity that had been requested by the Board the previous year and that any constraints in national execution would be included in the report that the Fund was preparing to present to the Board at the annual session in 1998.

33. Several delegations requested information on the efforts being made by the Fund to promote long-term availability of contraceptive commodities at the country level. Concern was expressed that the section of the Executive Director's annual report dealing with the Global Contraceptive Commodity Programme (GCCP) had not included information on quality control of contraceptives. The Executive Director explained that the Fund had supported some feasibility studies in the past on local contraceptive production facilities and had found that they were generally not cost-effective. Quality control was an integral part of the GCCP although she acknowledged that efforts needed to be strengthened at the country level. UNFPA was planning to set up some testing facilities, whose services could be shared among countries.

34. With regard to the issue of resources, several delegations expressed concern that the financial goals agreed upon at the ICPD were not being met. Addressing that failure should be the concern not only of UNFPA or of individual countries but should be the joint effort of the entire international community. Delegations called on UNFPA to further its efforts in resource mobilization and

asked donor countries to make every attempt to meet their ICPD commitments. UNFPA was encouraged to agree on a payment schedule with those countries that had made pledges but had not yet paid. The idea of a "debt swap" was endorsed by some countries while others pointed out that it did not address the principal issue raised by the Executive Director -- the failure of the donor countries to live up to their commitments. The Executive Director acknowledged the importance of the issues and said that she hoped the comments made by delegations would lead into an informative discussion later in the session on the conference room paper on resource mobilization that the Fund had prepared.

35. The Executive Board took note of the annual report of the Executive Director for 1996 on programme priorities, statistical overview and regional overview (DP/FPA/1997/10, Parts I, I/Add. 1 and Part II.

B. ICPD + 5

36. The initiative to review the progress of the ICPD in 1999, on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the Cairo Conference, received strong support from the delegations. Several of them requested additional information on the purpose of the exercise and its financial implications. Delegations also requested information on the role that the Commission on Population and Development would play in the proposed follow-up to the ICPD. Several delegations expressed their hope that the proposed activities would not create additional work for UNFPA and that other partners, including those outside the United Nations system, would be involved in the activities. One delegation emphasized that the follow-up process must include an evaluation of the qualitative impact that programmes were having, highlighting successes but also learning from other experiences as well.

37. The Executive Director said that she looked forward to further discussion on the question of "ICPD + 5" in its broader context and expressed appreciation for the support that had been expressed. She assured delegations that the Fund's own activities in reviewing operational experience would be carried out within the context of the current work programme of UNFPA. She felt that the proposed follow-up should involve all those concerned with implementing the ICPD, not just Governments and members of the United Nations system. The focus of the exercise would be on what had been achieved since the Cairo conference and what needed to be done in order to fulfill the goals of the ICPD Programme of Action, focusing on the constraints that remain to achieving those goals. The proposed follow-up would also give the international community an opportunity to learn from the successes that many countries had had in implementing the goals of the ICPD.

38. There was some discussion among delegations about the proper modalities for making a decision on the proposed "ICPD + 5". At the suggestion of the President of the Board, the meeting then adjourned into an informal session to discuss the procedural questions further, including a statement from the Director of the Population Division of the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis (DESIPA). On resumption of the formal session, the President proposed that a small working group of interested delegations meet to draft a decision for the Board's consideration.

39. The Executive Board adopted the following decision:

97/14. ICPD + 5: Five-year review of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development.

The Executive Board

1. Notes with appreciation the proposal of the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund to undertake a review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development;

2. Requests the Executive Director to undertake preparatory activities for the review and appraisal within the mandate of the United Nations Population Fund;

3. Invites the President of the Executive Board to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session, through the forthcoming session of the Economic and Social Council, the proposal for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference of Population and Development, for the consideration of the Ceneral Assembly and subsequent decision on the process and modalities.

16 May 1997

C. Resource mobilization

40. The ICPD Programme of Action had presented an agreed-upon scenario for mobilizing the resources (both domestic and donor funds) needed over a 20-year time span to implement the basic population and reproductive health package established by the conference. The price tag for that programme was $17 billion in 2000, increasing to $21.7 billion in 2015. UNFPA had prepared a conference room paper entitled ***Meeting the Goals of the ICPD: Consequences of Resource Shortfalls up to the Year 2000*** (DP/FPA/1997/CRP.1) to inform the Executive Board on the progress that had been made since the ICPD in realizing those financial goals. The paper highlighted in quantitative terms some consequences by the year 2000 if the ICPD programme were to be under-funded. Depending on the resource assumptions that were used, by the year 2000, anywhere from 96 million to 175 million fewer couples would use modern family planning services than would be the case if the ICPD resource goals were met; 43-78 million couples would not be using any contraceptive method at all; 43-88 million abortions would be added to the projected 225 million already expected between 1995 and 2000; a total of 57-104 million extra unintended births would occur between 1995 and 2000; an additional 65,000 to 117,000 women would die from maternal mortality causes; and the number of additional infants and young children that would die during 1995-2000 would be between 5.2 to 9.3 million.

41. In its discussion of the paper, several delegations welcomed the clear analysis of possible negative consequences of resource shortfalls while noting the preliminary nature of the paper's analysis. Two delegations felt, however, that the paper confused working hypotheses with tested numbers and expressed

concern that it presented hypothetical consequences as though they were a certainty. Many delegations praised the paper as an important contribution to the follow-up to the ICPD, particularly in its effort to begin a serious discussion on operationalizing the resource aspects of the ICPD Programme of Action and developing a joint resource strategy to assure its success. Some delegations considered the agreed ICPD targets for resource mobilization to be provisional estimates that needed to be further substantiated, especially the distribution of resources between the various components of the ICPD package. Others called for the paper to make explicit reference to data used and to describe in more detail the methodology for calculating consequences so that the analysis would stand up to close scrutiny.

42. After some discussion, the prevailing view was that the importance of the topic and the limited amount of time available precluded an in-depth consideration of the conference room paper. Those who had felt that there were certain deficiencies in the paper welcomed the opportunity for a revision that would, to the extent possible, take into account their comments. Therefore, the Executive Board decided to continue its discussion of the question of resource requirements for implementing the ICPD Programme of Action at a later date.

43. The Executive Board requested the Executive Director to revise the conference room paper on the consequences of resource shortfalls on meeting the goals of the International Conference on Population and Development (DP/FPA/1997/CRP.1) and to submit the revised report as an official document to the Executive Board at its third regular session 1997.

III. UNFPA: EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

44. The report on evaluation activities, part of the Executive Director's Annual Report (DP/FPA/1997/10(Part III)), was introduced by the Deputy Executive Director (Programme). She said that the Fund's evaluation activities were taking place in an environment of increasing decentralization. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms had systematically been put in place throughout the Fund, and external evaluations were occurring with increasing frequency. The Fund's guidelines on monitoring and evaluation were being revised to emphasize qualitative aspects and to better reflect the programme approach. The revised guidelines included provisions for evaluation at the end of every programme. In 1996, UNFPA had completed two thematic evaluations -- one on the effectiveness of support to traditional birth attendants (TBAs) and the other on adolescent reproductive health. At the request of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), there had also been an external evaluation of staff training programmes at the Fund, and the results of that evaluation would be presented to the Board, through the ACABQ, at the third regular session 1997. In addition, an external evaluation of the technical support services (TSS) specialist posts was conducted and its findings would also be reported to the Board in September 1997.

45. The Deputy Executive Director (Programme) detailed other efforts to improve monitoring and evaluation, including the training in logical framework techniques initiated in 1996 for many of the Fund's staff. In late 1995 the

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Executive Director had initiated a system of policy application reviews to ensure accountability in country offices. The results of the first eight such reviews were summarized in the document presented to the Board. In late 1996 the Executive Director had established the Office of Oversight and Evaluation, reporting directly to her, as a focal point for monitoring follow-up to various oversight functions and to manage policy application reviews and major independent evaluations.

46. Following the introduction by the Deputy Executive Director (Programme) several delegations commented on topics she had raised or that had been presented in the document. One delegation felt that the thematic evaluations, such as those on traditional birth attendants (TBAs) and adolescent reproductive health, were particularly valuable. The delegation requested more information on deliverables, i.e., on how the evaluations will lead to changes in programme design. It was also noted that the report presented to the Board stated that "advocacy as a thematic area presents conceptual difficulty". How was that situation being addressed?

47. One delegation was worried about the overwhelming demands on the UNFPA Country Support Teams (CSTs) and wondered whether there could not be greater reliance on the use of national experts. It suggested that greater use of national expertise required a change in the "mind set" of UNFPA Representatives. Another delegation said that it did not perceive in the report that the Fund was making the kind of integrated evaluation findings that would make it possible to really judge the effectiveness of UNFPA programmes.

48. One delegation welcomed the strong commitment to monitoring programme performance and felt that the establishment of the Office of Oversight and Evaluation was a very positive development. It also noted that technical exchanges concerning programme activities had increased among donors in recent years. In that regard, the recent evaluation workshop in London had shown that it was necessary to move to a standardized list of reproductive health indicators. Doing so would help not only UNFPA but other development partners working in the area as well.

49. One delegation, speaking for another as well, thanked the Fund for the very candid report on evaluation. In the evaluation of the Fund's programme in Papua New Guinea discussed in the document, what were the design lessons that had been gleaned? The evaluation clearly showed the need for greater focus, as well as for greater involvement by the Government, and the delegations wondered how the lessons learned were being utilized. The delegations were pleased that the summary of the evaluation of the TSS system addressed issues of impact. The delegations asked how the use of logical framework techniques would help in measuring performance. In sum, those delegations found that the paper was a broadly factual statement of activities in the area of evaluation that did not recommend courses of actions to address specific issues. But, in fact, those delegations felt that it was necessary to draw conclusions about lessons learned and transmit them throughout the organization.

50. One delegation asked for clarification on how the thematic evaluations pertained to regional programmes. The delegation felt that there was a need to increase effectiveness by stimulating more interaction between headquarters and

country offices. Another delegation stressed that the periodic reports on evaluation were indispensable for the Executive Board to do its job. The same delegation was concerned about the number of external evaluations that were being carried out. It asked that the evaluations be made accessible via the Internet; if that was impractical for all of the evaluations, then perhaps it would be possible to at least include summaries of the thematic evaluations. The ones on TBAs and adolescent reproductive health were particularly valuable and needed to be more widely disseminated. The delegation felt that there needed to be an ongoing evaluation of TSS. As for the policy application reviews, it was necessary to give attention to the difficulties enumerated, and the use of new concepts had to be carefully monitored.

51. One delegation, speaking for another as well, said that they were satisfied with the overall direction and coverage of the report on evaluation, but they were interested in the scope for the possibility of joint evaluations with other United Nations agencies and organizations. It welcomed the new Office of Oversight and Evaluation but was concerned that it concentrated too many functions in one office; after all, audit and oversight were very different from evaluation and policy reviews. It might be necessary to separate the functions in the future. These delegations mentioned several topics that they would like to see covered in future reports: a workplan for future evaluation activities; more discussion on how the findings were being disseminated; what criteria were established for carrying out recommendations; what was being done to see that the staff understood the new post-ICPD concepts. In referring to the post-ICPD concepts, these delegations felt that advocacy was crucial but seemed not to be accorded the importance it deserved - just because the results were not directly measurable did not mean that they were unimportant. Gender issues also seemed to be receiving a small share of total resources. Although gender was a cross-cutting issue, it also deserved concentrated efforts and follow-up as much as the three core programme areas.

52. One delegation pointed out that there had been a large number of evaluations. Perhaps it was possible to merge some of them in order to carry them out more efficiently? Was self-monitoring part of the standard design of projects? In that regard, another delegation said that in talking about evaluation it was clear that that term included several levels of evaluation, including monitoring, but those distinctions needed to be maintained - it was clear, for example, that the programme review and strategy development (PRSD) exercise was not evaluation. Likewise, internal oversight was distinct from evaluation and needed to be differentiated.

53. Another delegation noted that adolescent reproductive health was a great concern and that the results of the evaluation on that topic had to be used in its country and elsewhere. The point of operational activities was to build up capacity so that programme countries could carry out their own activities, and evaluations helped to achieve that. One institution should learn from another.

54. The Deputy Executive Director (Programme) thanked the delegations for the positive comments they had made about the evaluation report. She said that of course one of the major preoccupations of the Fund was how to absorb and use the results of evaluations. There was, for example, a system for reviewing the results of thematic evaluations that included the drafting of a programme

advisory note that was then disseminated widely, including to all country offices and CSTs. The problem of conceptualizing advocacy was being resolved in new guidelines being issued to country offices. She agreed that national expertise should be utilized to the extent possible and that CSTs could not take care of all concerns. That was why the Fund was actively involved in drawing up rosters of national experts through the joint efforts of country offices and CSTs. She agreed that it was necessary to be more explicit about the intention of evaluation activities and that there should be a firmer link between headquarters and the field. She said that the Fund was undertaking the widest possible dissemination of the results of the thematic evaluations on TBAs and adolescent reproductive health. The results of the evaluation of the Papua New Guinea country programme were being utilized in the design of the new programme. She reported that the logical framework techniques did include explicit steps on monitoring and evaluation, but it would take time for all the staff to be trained in those techniques and a while before the results became apparent in the programmes themselves. She said that the thematic evaluations were set up to address perceived global needs.

55. The Deputy Executive Director (Programme) agreed that there was a distinction between monitoring and evaluation; the distinction was clearly made in our activities but perhaps had not been clear enough in the report. In discussing those distinctions, the report had employed the generally used language, and she apologized if there had been confusion -- monitoring and the PRSD exercises were clearly not considered to be evaluation activities. Audits were not implemented by the Office of Oversight and Evaluation although the Office had responsibility for seeing that audit recommendations with Fund-wide implications were carried out. The number of evaluations varied greatly from year to year; 1996 had been an unusually high year because many programmes and, therefore, projects had expired, necessitating many evaluations. In the future, as the Fund moved more to a sub-programme approach, there would be an emphasis on more holistic evaluations, and country programme evaluations would be mandatory.

56. She agreed that the future evaluation workplan needed to be more explicit. For the information of the Executive Board, the thematic evaluations scheduled for 1997 were on Safe Motherhood and HIV/AIDS. In answer to questions as to whether all projects would be evaluated and whether there would be built-in self-monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in projects, she said that there would be greater use of such mechanisms, but there would not always be external evaluations. She reiterated that the Fund had completed an evaluation of staff training programmes, and a report would be presented to the Board for the third regular session 1997. She concurred that the Fund had perhaps not done enough in evaluating its gender activities, but more would be done in the future. UNFPA continued to support the overall United Nations focus on harmonizing indicators between agencies. She expected that the question of national execution would receive considerable attention in the absorptive capacity study that was being prepared for the Board's consideration the following year.

57. The Board decided to take note of the report on UNFPA evaluation activities (DP/FPA/1997/10, Part III).

IV. UNFPA: WORK PLAN FOR 1998-2001

58. The Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) introduced the work plan for 1998-2001 and request for programme expenditure authority (DP/FPA/1997/7). He briefly reviewed the financial performance of UNFPA in 1996, emphasizing the slight reduction in income from regular resources compared to 1995, the consequent reduction in the regular resources used for project expenditures and the reduction in carry-forwards by $2 million from the end of 1995 to the end of 1996. In developing the proposed work plan for 1998-2001, UNFPA had used an estimate for 1997 income of $325 million and an annual increase in income of 7 per cent. This led to a total income for the work plan period of more than $1.5 billion, $84 million higher than the estimates for the 1997-2000 work plan period.

59. In reviewing the performance of the Fund in 1996, several delegations expressed support to the increasing trend of resource allocation in favour of Africa and of category "A" countries, which was also reflected in the planning figures of the 1998-2001 work plan. One delegation sought assurances that in applying Executive Board decision 96/15 on the allocation of resources, UNFPA would also bear in mind the merit of individual country programmes. Another delegation sought assurances that increased support for reproductive health activities would not mean a reduction in support for related information, education and communication activities.

60. With regard to the proposed work plan for 1998-2001, delegations generally expressed support for the financial planning figures and praised the reduction that had been made in the carry forwards. There were several questions as to whether maintaining the operational reserve at 20 per cent of income was appropriate or not. Several delegations commented that the 7 per cent estimated annual increase in income seemed too high. The figure was thought to be too optimistic, especially in light of the fact that regular resources had actually declined by 1 per cent from 1995 to 1996 and that official development assistance (ODA) was declining throughout the world. Some delegations also raised questions on the strategy that the Fund would adopt in the case of a shortfall in resources and wondered at the estimate that multi-bilateral resources would reach $25 million a year during the 1998-2001 period.

61. Delegations welcomed the efforts of UNFPA to keep the cost of administrative activities under control and not to decrease the share of income devoted to country programme activities, but some expressed concern regarding the increases foreseen in the work plan document for the administrative and programme support services (APSS) budget during the 1998-2001 period, especially in light of the current policy of decentralization of administrative activities.

62. The Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) responded to the concerns of the Executive Board regarding the estimated rate of annual income increase by informing the delegations that 7 per cent was the average of the annual increases in income experienced by the Fund over the past eight years and that therefore it should be considered as a safe long-term planning figure. He stressed that since the work plan was a rolling four-year plan, the estimated rate of increase would be revised annually in accordance with the actual

contributions received. With respect to the strategy that the Fund would adopt in the case of a shortfall in resources, he pointed out that a greater predictability of contributions from donor countries would allow UNFPA to put into effect a better planning of resources, which in turn would reduce the risk of a shortfall in resources. He also underscored, in that regard, that past experience had taught the Fund that a 20 per cent operational reserve was essential in light of the uncertainty of income levels, and he added that nonetheless UNFPA would continue to monitor the reserve closely. With regard to the work plan estimation for multi-bilateral resources of $25 million a year for the 1998-2001 period, he informed the delegations that the estimate was based upon preliminary indications from individual donors and the European Union.

63. With respect to the concerns expressed about the APSS budget, the Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) explained that the APSS budget would be thoroughly discussed by the Executive Board in the context of the September session. He also emphasized that in the last two bienniums the Fund had been able to realize savings in its administrative expenses so that the allocated budget had not been fully utilized and added that the projected increase in the APSS budget was also the effect of underlying inflation and statutory cost increases.

64. The Executive Board adopted the following decision:

97/11. Work plan for 1998-2001 and request for programme expenditure authority

The Executive Board

1. Endorses the programme resource planning proposals of the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund set out in paragraphs 7 to 18;

2. Approves the request for the 1998 programme expenditure authority at a level equal to expected new programmable resources for 1998, currently estimated at $278 million;

3. Endorses the use of the following estimates of new programmable resources from regular resources for programme planning for the 1999-2001 period; $298 million for 1999; $318 million for 2000; and $341 million for 2001;

4. Also endorses the use of the following estimates of new programmable resources from multi-bilateral funding; $25 million per year for the years 1998-2001.

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V. UNFPA: PROGRAMMING PROCESS

65. Delegations expressed appreciation for the proposals contained in the document prepared for the Executive Board on Recommendations on the UNFPA programming process (DP/FP/1997/9), the main points of which were summarized by the Deputy Executive Director (Programme). Many delegations welcomed the proposal in the report to participate more actively in the programming process.

There was general agreement that an optimum time for input by members of the Board would be as part of the PRSD exercise when the strategic framework of the programme was being designed. However, several delegations reiterated that participation in the PRSD exercise by the representatives of individual member states was not the same as having the proposed programme scrutinized by Executive Board and the Board could not abdicate its governance responsibilities. Many delegations also stressed that the national sovereignty of the programme country must be the priority concern during the programming process and, thus, that the primary responsibility for that process must continue to rest with the Government and UNFPA. There was general agreement that any programme approval process that was adopted should not add to the administrative burden on UNFPA. One delegation suggested that whatever process was adopted should be reviewed after two years.

66. Several delegations mentioned that the programme process being considered did offer a good balance between the modalities currently being used by UNDP and UNICEF, both of which had their strong and weak points. It was stressed, however, that an ultimate goal should be to harmonize the processes of all three bodies. In discussing the details of the proposed programme approval process, one delegation commented that it would be necessary to establish a deadline to receive the comments of members once the programme strategy document had been circulated. Delegations concurred that once comments had been received informal discussions might be necessary to resolve any differences but that such discussions should be left to the discretion of the Fund, if it felt they were advisable. One delegation asked who would be responsible for paying for the costs of participation in the PRSD exercise.

67. Given the large number of country programmes that often needed to be considered, many delegations expressed the view that a "no-objection" process should be used, i.e., a country programme would be automatically approved unless members requested a formal consideration. There were differing views on the modalities for initiating such a formal consideration, with many feeling that the current UNDP rule that required a written request by five members was too restrictive. Some delegations noted that the term "no-objection" was misleading in the sense that it was not that members objected to a proposed programme but that they wanted to make comments and/or ask for clarifications. The opinion was also expressed that the no-objection policy could lead to the impression that certain countries were being singled out, and that had to be avoided.

68. One delegation expressed the view that the governing principles behind any proposal should be simplicity, professionalism and mutual confidence. Another delegation mentioned that Executive Board input could not be translated into action exhaustively; it had to be used to provide strategic guidelines for cooperation. In that regard, another delegation said that the role of the Board in the country programming process should be to follow up on the implementation of the ICPD. Several delegations mentioned that they had found the informal sessions with UNFPA Representatives to be particularly valuable and asked that they be continued. One delegation stated that it appreciated the emphasis on lessons learned, strategic proposals and programme outputs. One delegation, seconded by another, said that the role of the Fund should be expanded to meet the needs of vulnerable groups, such as rural communities, and the challenges posed by HIV/AIDS.

69. One delegation encouraged the Fund to use local expertise in conducting the PRSD missions while another reiterated the view that government representation in the process was crucial. There was a need to preserve national sovereignty, and it was not clear how early involvement of the Board would be reconciled with that. That same delegation questioned the notion of "give and take", as mentioned in document DP/FPA/1997/9, between the Fund and Executive Board members in developing programme strategy: the strategy had to be agreed upon by the Government and UNFPA.

70. In replying to the comments and questions of the delegations, the Deputy Executive Director (Programme) stated that she was pleased that the Executive Board endorsed early involvement in the programming process and wanted to keep that process simple. She explained that the programming process had two main stages: first was the review and recommendations of the PRSD and, second, came the preparation of the country programme, which was undertaken jointly between the Government and UNFPA. She stressed that the wider consultation now being envisaged would be on the PRSD recommendations for UNFPA action since the country programme itself was the result of agreement between UNFPA and the Government. UNFPA considered that the role of the Government was central to the programming process. The Fund was revising its PRSD guidelines and one of the changes being made was to ensure that the PRSD process was nationally driven. Capacity-building was very important and was one of the aims of the PRSD process.

71. She said that she was pleased that the Executive Board had appreciated the difficulties involved for the Fund if it were necessary to present two formal documents, at different stages, for the Board's consideration, as was done under certain other programme approval processes. She said that the Fund would like to keep informal consultations with Board members on the programme recommendations optional: that would help to avoid delays because they might not always be necessary. In response to a question about languages, she informed the Board that the PRSD recommendations would necessarily be circulated in the language in which it was prepared, either English, French or Spanish. On the question of the costs of participating in the PRSD, she stated that it would be up to the participating country. The harmonization of procedures with other agencies and organizations was important, and she expected that the procedures would be revised as the current United Nations reform process took shape. She said that the Fund had been concentrating its programmes much more on addressing the needs of vulnerable groups.

72. Following informal consultations, the Executive Board adopted the following decision to take effect from 1 January 1998:

97/12. Recommendations on the programming process of the United Nations Population Fund

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the report of the Executive Director on the programming process of the United Nations Population Fund (DP/FPA/1997/9);

2. Recognizes that the primary responsibility for developing a country programme lies with the Government of the programme country with the support of the United Nations Population Fund;

3. Requests that in its programming process the United Nations Population Fund take into account the following, bearing in mind the need to limit the administrative burden:

(a) That during the Programme Review and Strategy Development process, the United Nations Population Fund will offer briefings at the field level for interested parties on the emerging findings;

(b) That the United Nations Population Fund will make available the summary of the Programme Review and Strategy Development process (the country recommendation), which will show: (i) proposed strategic actions and their rationale; (ii) the comparative advantage of the United Nations Population Fund and its complementarity vis-à-vis other actors; and (iii) possible thematic areas, drawing throughout also on lessons learned from other programmes;

(c) That the country recommendation will be made available by the secretariat to all members of the United Nations Population Fund, upon request, who may offer views on the recommendation, within six weeks of transmission, which the secretariat will take into account in further developing the programme; the United Nations Population Fund will inform the Executive Board of this process; these views will also be made available to all members of the United Nations Population Fund, upon request; the United Nations Population Fund may, if needed, arrange a discussion at headquarters with the participation of the programme country;

4. Requests that country programmes presented to the Executive Board contain clear statements of purpose, deliverables (for each sub-programme area), financial parameters and the indicators by which the United Nations Population Fund will measure programme performance, effectiveness and impact;

5. Decides that country programmes will be considered for approval by the Executive Board without discussion unless one is requested by more than one member, in writing, in principle two weeks before the session;

6. Recommends that the efforts of working towards harmonized arrangements for country programming processes in the United Nations system should, when possible, be coordinated and harmonized with other funds and programmes;

7. Requests that the operation of these arrangements be reviewed by the Executive Director at such a time as to allow a report to be presented to the Executive Board at its annual session 2000.

16 May 1997

VI. UNFPA: INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

73. The Director of the Information and External Relations Division introduced the report on the UNFPA information and communication strategy (DP/FPA/1997/8). He began by explaining that the report had enjoyed substantial Executive Board collaboration through several informal meetings over the past year. The aim had been to find the best way to maximize the resources of UNFPA in its mission to promote awareness of population issues at all levels of society in both developed and developing countries. The Fund's strategy, as part of its overall role in advocacy, was to ensure that the principles, goals and objectives of the ICPD were understood and accepted as a commitment in all countries.

74. The Director outlined four kinds of activities to be undertaken as part of the global information and communication strategy: to increase awareness and understanding of the role and relevance of population in the development process and to build support for UNFPA's activities; to build support for all the goals of the ICPD; to mobilize the resources called for in the ICPD Programme of Action; and to provide assistance at the national level to build capacity in the areas of information and communication to support reproductive health and population and development strategies. These activities were in addition to national-level activities for advocacy and IEC that were part of country programmes. In that regard, he pointed out a display of UNFPA information and communication materials that included many items from programme countries.

75. He went on to say that the Fund was working with relevant NGOs in all donor countries. A poll had recently been conducted in European countries on public awareness of population issues and UNFPA, and its results had been disseminated in partnership with IPPF and 17 national European NGOs. The poll data reflected a low level of population issues but support for government development aid to support family planning, HIV/AIDS prevention and education. The task ahead was to better educate the public to generate understanding and support for the goals of the ICPD.

76. The Director informed the Board of certain steps that were being taken to improve communication: enhancements being made to the Internet connection and the Fund's World Wide Web page and continuing efforts to enlist prominent international personalities as "Goodwill Ambassadors" in various countries of the world. He stressed that the best advocacy was a good programme. Communicating was a difficult challenge and it was even more difficult to measure success, he emphasized. The Fund's advocacy role was essential to its success, and it had committed itself to do everything possible to promote the ICPD goals.

77. In the discussion that followed, the majority of delegations expressed appreciation for the consultative process that had been undertaken as part of the document's preparation. One delegation expressed the hope that the momentum would not be lost now that the strategy had been developed. Several delegations questioned whether the strategy described activities to be carried out in the future or those that were being carried out presently. A number of delegations said that the strategy's design should be an ongoing process. Stressing the importance of monitoring, several delegations suggested that oral reports on the

strategy's implementation be made at future meetings of the Executive Board. The need for linguistic balance in all UNFPA publications and on its web page was emphasized by a number of delegations. One delegation said that efforts should be made to avoid a situation where international and regional level activities were overemphasized at the expense of activities at the local level.

78. It was stated by one delegation that the report did not clearly distinguish between communication policies directed towards donor countries and advocacy undertaken at the national level as part of country programmes. Several delegations stressed that the Fund's work should take different forms depending on the culture concerned and emphasized the need for local adaptation of information materials and advocacy activities. It was suggested by one delegation that innovative communication strategies employed by certain NGOs would serve as good models for UNFPA.

79. One delegation said that activities designed to raise awareness about UNFPA would not be productive and suggested instead that advocacy focus on raising the profile of successful programme activities. Another delegation sought information on collaboration between UNFPA and other United Nations bodies in the field of information. A suggestion was put forward by one delegation (who spoke on behalf of a regional group) that UNFPA use the upcoming Olympics as a venue for raising awareness about population and development-related issues. Another delegation said that successful activities in programme countries should form the basis for technical cooperation among developing countries.

80. One delegation asked whether anything was being done to take the opportunity of "ICPD + 5" to engage a wider range of groups in discussions about reproductive health issues. Another delegation asked how the Fund's strategy fit in with overall United Nations efforts to improve its information and communication activities. Several delegations stressed that UNFPA should make full use of NGOs and grass-roots networks in implementing the communication strategy. Another delegation suggested that the strategy could benefit from identifying priority areas. One delegation stressed that particular attention must be paid to the least developed countries, which often lacked sophisticated technology, such as access to the Internet. It was also suggested by a number of delegations that priority be given to training activities.

81. Responding to points raised by delegates, the Director of the Information and External Relations Division said that advocacy was built into all country programmes and that the amount spent by UNFPA on global advocacy was very small. Materials produced internationally were designed to be locally adapted and were translated into local languages. Each country produced its own materials in local languages that were used at the grass-roots level.

82. Concerning the momentum of consultations, he said that it would certainly be maintained. That afternoon, for the first time, an informal briefing session would be held for Board members on the *State of World Population Report*. He said there was no confusion within the Fund about the necessity for activities that supported national programmes and advocacy undertaken at the global level. Advocacy and IEC projects were designed to support programmes as agreed upon by national Governments and UNFPA. The Fund had conducted advocacy training for

field and headquarters staff. Such training aimed to help them understand and conceptualize how to advocate for the inclusion of population dimensions in development programmes, and to address ICPD goals in development financing. Training addressed such issues as target audiences and message content. Country representatives were expected to promote a population package as part of overall development. They were also advocates for the ICPD Programme of Action as a whole. Internationally, the focus was on the necessity of meeting the financial goals of the ICPD and building support for that.

83. The Director said that the Fund certainly viewed its information and communication strategy as evolving. Work plans were being developed each year that used the best possible means to get the Fund's message out. Concerning linguistic balance, he said that UNFPA produced its major materials in all six official languages of the United Nations. The *State of World Population Report* was produced in 23 languages. All programme materials were produced in local languages. He said that the Fund would look into doing more with different languages on the Internet, but added that the extent to which that would be possible would depend on the available resources. He went on to say that UNFPA was necessarily sensitive to all cultural dimensions and routinely tailored advocacy materials and messages to specific cultural contexts. The Fund was trying to use as many media as possible that were available and affordable.

84. Regarding activities to raise the Fund's profile, he said that according to a recent poll conducted by UNFPA in 13 European countries, organizations and issues that were best known received the most public support. Policy makers and parliamentarians said that they needed a stronger public understanding and support for the mission of UNFPA in order to advocate on its behalf. The public would not look kindly on governments that financed programmes that they did not understand or support. He said that plans were being made to make the most use of "ICPD + 5", which would also be the year that the world's population would reach six billion and that UNFPA would mark its thirtieth anniversary.

85. On the issue of coordination, he said that UNFPA was working extensively with many other United Nations agencies. For example, it was producing booklets on Safe Motherhood in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Health Organization (WHO). It had also produced the AIDS clock with UNAIDS. UNFPA was working with its partners in the Joint United Nations Information Committee (JUNIC). It was also pooling its resources with the United Nations Department of Public Information (DPI), and had launched an 80-part radio series in collaboration with DPI. He supported the statements about the importance of working with non-governmental organizations and noted that UNFPA was currently doing so around the world, including with the IPPF. Further, UNFPA worked with civic groups, religious leaders, specific politicians and even the military in programme countries. He welcomed the suggestion about engaging the International Olympic Committee, but noted that such efforts were limited by the number of staff available. In response to the budgetary situation, efforts were being made to secure external sources of funding for some of these information and communication activities.

86. Agreeing that the strategy's development was an ongoing process, the Director said the report was meant to give an indication of where the Fund's

attention was focused and what it intended to do. Efforts were always made to plan ahead and find the most opportune time and circumstances to produce information materials. For example, a booklet on women and food security was issued in time for the World Food Summit, and the *1996 State of World Population Report* covered the issue of urbanization, in line with the holding of the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (HABITAT II) that same year.

87. The Director of the Technical and Evaluation Division noted that many delegations had highlighted the need for country-specific IEC activities and their point was well taken. In relation to advocacy within the country programme context, he said there was a need to emphasize the ICPD goals; re-orient country programme work along ICPD lines; and, in some countries, rally political support, especially for programmes concerning adolescents. Community support should also be mobilized for reproductive health services and educational activities for adolescents. He said efforts were under way to increase South-South cooperation. Indonesia, for example, was sharing its IEC and advocacy experience with African and Asian countries.

88. The Director said that many of the activities of UNFPA in information and communication were at the country level. Reproductive health, including family planning and sexual health, were the priority. In that domain, efforts were made to identify what could be done in collaboration with the Fund's partners, including governments, non-governmental organizations, the World Bank and others. He said that indicators were being developed to assess the impact of IEC and advocacy activities. Those indicators, which were in their early stages of development, would increasingly be built into the country programme framework.

89. The Executive Board adopted the following decision:

97/13. UNFPA information and communication strategy

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the report on the United Nations Population Fund information and communication strategy (DP/FPA/1997/8) and the comments made thereon by the Executive Board;

2. Endorses the overall goal of the United Nations Population Fund information and communication strategy, which is to promote the principles, goals and objectives of the International Conference on Population and Development and to help turn these principles, goals and objectives into practical reality at the national, regional and international levels;

3. Further endorses the specific goals and corresponding strategies of the information and communication activities of the United Nations Population Fund as contained in paragraphs 4 and 22 of the report;

4. Stresses the importance of maintaining linguistic balance in the electronic dissemination of information;

5. *Also stresses* that monitoring and evaluation are integral and important parts of information and communication activities and that there is a need to strengthen these functions, taking into account the difficulty, methodologically and operationally, of measuring the impact or effectiveness of such activities;

6. *Requests* the Executive Director to report orally each year, at the annual session, on the progress in the implementation of the present decision and on the coordinating efforts undertaken in this area within the United Nations system;

7. *Also requests* the Executive Director to review the Fund's information and communication strategy in four years and to report thereon to the Executive Board at its annual session 2001.

16 May 1997

UNDP/UNFPA SEGMENT

VII. REPORTS TO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

A. Reports to the Economic and Social Council

90. The Administrator introduced his report to the Economic and Social Council (DP/1997/15), noting the great importance he placed on discussion of the item. He cited the common reporting format agreed on with other United Nations funds and programmes, the coverage in the report of follow-up to four related but distinct General Assembly resolutions, and the incorporation of comments and recommendations of the Executive Board on the report of the previous year.

91. He noted that the follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolution 96/42 was directly linked to the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 47/199 and 50/120. As Administrator, he served as Convenor of the Executive Committee of the Development Cooperation Group, one of the four sector groups created by the Secretary-General. As Convenor of the Executive Committee, he had prioritized the follow-up to General Assembly resolution 50/120 and the implementation of the Secretary-General's "track one" reform measures in the Development Cooperation Group. The Executive Committee, which met monthly, aimed to strengthen the resident coordinator system, the move to common premises and services, and to formulate a United Nations development assistance framework. On 8 April 1997, the Executive Committee had agreed to maintain the current arrangement regarding the resident coordinator system under the stewardship of UNDP, with the understanding that there would be major improvements in the way it functioned. He then described several aspects of the resident coordinator system that would be examined by the Executive Committee of the Development Cooperation Group. The Administrator elaborated on the comparative advantages of UNDP in leading the resident coordinator system. The leadership of the Administrator as Convenor of the Executive Committee of the Development Cooperation Group was coherent with that of UNDP as steward of the

resident coordinator system at the country level. He noted that the Development Cooperation Group had taken up the issues of common premises and services and the proposed development cooperation framework. The Office for United Nations System Support and Services (OUNS), which supported him in his role as Convenor of the Executive Committee, would be strengthened through future staff secondments from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Food Programme (WFP).

92. As one of the best examples of a coordinated system-wide undertaking, the Administrator also cited the work of inter-agency groups established by the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) to constitute an integrated framework for follow-up to the major United Nations conferences. A workshop on the follow-up to conferences would be organized by OUNS and the ACC Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ) in autumn 1997 at the Turin Centre, prior to continued review of the subject at the second session of ACC in 1997. The Administrator cited his interest in rationalizing the relationship between the process of the inter-agency groups and the intergovernmental reviews of the follow-up to conferences, including the need for more streamlined reporting arrangements. There could be, for example, reporting on each conference by lead agencies to the respective functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, with the support of the United Nations Secretariat. Similarly, reports based on the work of the three ACC Task Forces and the Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality would be prepared annually for the Council, coordinated by the Convenor of the Development Cooperation Group. Thus, both conference-by-conference reporting on overall implementation and reporting on United Nations assistance to programme countries would be possible.

93. In the follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/43, the report (DP/1997/15) cited the measures taken to enhance collaboration between UNDP and the Bretton Woods institutions. The Administrator informed the Executive Board that UNDP was aware of the new directions taken by the management of the World Bank and hoped that dialogue with the Bank would be enhanced with a view to ensuring complementarity and a division of labour between the two organizations. He expressed the view that grant-based technical cooperation aimed at building key governance capabilities for sustainable human development should be the responsibility of UNDP.

94. In referring to the follow-up to General Assembly resolution 50/227, the Administrator informed the Executive Board that UNDP was in the process of developing a comprehensive funding strategy. Owing to the number of informal consultations on other subjects, it had not been possible to hold informals to prepare the way for the funding strategy. He hoped that the paper would be available at the third regular session 1997 following discussions at the present session, at the informal consultations in June, and at the Economic and Social Council. Paragraphs 33 and 36 of document DP/1997/15 contained the kernel of a resource mobilization strategy, which would be further elaborated on in the paper. He cited the expected income for UNDP in 1997 to be an estimated $2 billion in total resources, with approximately $800 million of that amount in contributions to the core budget. He emphasized that while the target for the overall resource mobilization of UNDP would be the sum total of all resource mobilization targets of all country cooperation frameworks, the bedrock was the

contributions to the core budget. The core resource mobilization target of $3.3 billion for 1997-1999 contained in Executive Board decision 95/23 should be taken seriously. Despite reform and streamlining by UNDP and improvements in governance, as cited in General Assembly resolution 50/227, the contributions to the core budget continued to decrease. For UNDP to undertake all the work that it was responsible for and to respond effectively to the needs of developing countries, it would need increased contributions to its core budget. UNDP would like to move to a funding strategy that featured a more predictable base at a higher level than was currently the case.

95. In introducing the UNFPA reports to the Economic and Social Council (DP/FPA/1997/10 (Part V)), the Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) stated that coordination of operational activities was widely recognized as the overarching priority of the United Nations development framework. In that regard, UNFPA continued to work closely with all of its development partners, in, for example, chairing inter-agency task forces on the follow-up to international conferences, in participation in such mechanisms as the Joint Consultative Group on Policy (JCGP), ACC and CCPOQ, and continuing its close cooperation with other agencies and organizations in strengthening the resident coordinator system.

96. The Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) informed the Executive Board that relations between UNFPA and the Bretton Woods institutions and funding for operational activities had been dealt with in the document as a build-up to the triennial policy review scheduled for 1998. The position of UNFPA on funding for operational activities was being coordinated with the United Nations Secretariat as part of the Secretary-General's report to the Economic and Social Council. The Fund was looking at new ways of collaborating with the Bretton Woods institutions within the terms of the UNFPA mandate. Other topics addressed in the report included harmonization of programme processes, national execution and national capacity-building, and monitoring and evaluation of UNFPA programmes.

General comments

97. Delegations welcomed the introductory remarks of the Administrator and the Deputy Executive Director and expressed their satisfaction with the reports to the Economic and Social Council of the Administrator (DP/1997/15) and the Executive Director (DP/FPA/1997/10 (Part V)), citing the improvements over those of previous years. Some speakers stated that more analysis and reference to problems faced by UNDP and UNFPA in implementing the legislation could be included in future reports to the Council. More information on linkages with overall United Nations reform would be welcomed. Delegations appreciated the fact that the reports employed a common format with other United Nations funds and programmes and noted that their contents illustrated progress in the follow-up and implementation of General Assembly and Economic and Social Council resolutions. A few delegations proposed that the reports include suggested recommendations to the Council on follow-up to resolutions. One delegation requested more clarity on data in the report of UNFPA relating to country-level operations and expressed support for a recommendation of the Executive Director to lessen and streamline reporting arrangements.

98. One speaker, on behalf of the African Group, underlined the support of that regional group for the work done by UNDP to follow up the resolutions of the General Assembly and Economic and Social Council, as cited in DP/1997/15.

Follow-up to implementation of General Assembly resolutions 47/199 and 50/120 and to Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/42

99. Many speakers welcomed the remarks made by the Administrator on the part of the report concerning the resolution, in particular with regard to the resident coordinator system and the increased commitment to partnership both at the headquarters and country levels. Much progress had been seen in the area, including on the harmonization of programme cycles and budget presentations. An update on programme delivery was requested, an area that many speakers stressed must continue to be a top priority of UNDP. One speaker, also on behalf of another, requested information on the 26 countries that would not have harmonized programmes by 1999. The rise in nationally executed programmes was welcomed and should be further increased. The issuance of the reference manual for operational activities was welcomed. Support for the leadership role of UNDP in the resident coordinator system was expressed. More information on the coordination of regional activities was sought.

100. Efforts to broaden the pool of resident coordinators coming from different United Nations organizations should be continued and enhanced. Some speakers requested that the Administrator continue to provide an update to the Executive Board at future sessions on the numbers of resident coordinators coming from outside of UNDP, as well as information on the staff secondments to OUNS. Many speakers emphasized the importance of strengthening the resident coordinator system and underlined the need for all organizations to be fully committed to that goal. One speaker cited the need for resident coordinators to be impartial and to function as a partner with others in the system. Another speaker requested further information about the cost of managing the resident coordinator system.

101. Several delegations urged UNDP to continue the move to common premises and services in order to fulfil the requirements of General Assembly resolution 50/120. The document (DP/1997/15) contained reservations on that issue in the view of some speakers. Some speakers supported the need to look at common premises and services on a case-by-case basis. One delegation stated that it was considering a "soft earmarking" of funding to promote common premises in 1997. Another delegation requested further information about the reference in paragraph 28 to the use of real estate management consultants by the JCGP Sub-Group on Common Premises and Services. A query was raised about whether there was a detrimental effect to harmonization when funds and programmes used different information systems.

102. The Administrator stated that the commitment of UNDP to common premises was complete and that the organization would pursue it vigorously.

103. Enhanced harmonization of monitoring and evaluation activities by UNDP was also encouraged.

104. Several delegations welcomed actions undertaken by UNFPA, as described in the report, in the following areas: harmonization of programme cycles and programming procedures; national execution and national capacity-building; monitoring and evaluation; decentralization; and harmonization of budget presentations. The achievement of close to a 50:50 gender ratio of Professional staff was also welcomed. With regard to monitoring and evaluation, delegations welcomed the inclusion of lessons learned in country programme presentations. Several speakers welcomed the clear commitment of UNFPA to the resident coordinator system.

105. Many delegations supported the use by UNFPA of the programme approach and the role of the Executive Board in the programming process. They welcomed the decentralization of approval authority as a means to strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of programme delivery. A few delegations questioned the effect that decentralization would have in terms of the procedures and role of the Fund's internal Programme Review Committee.

Follow-up to General Assembly resolution 50/227

106. Several delegations looked forward to receiving the UNDP paper on funding, which they stated should include information on the consequences of declines in funding levels to the core budget. Many speakers expressed concern about the shortfall in contributions to core resources. Some delegations underlined that core resources ensured fairness and universality of assistance. Some speakers cited what they considered to be an unfair burden-sharing among donors, with concentration among only a few at the highest levels. Traditional donors and emerging donors should be encouraged to contribute more to UNDP core resources. A query was raised about the linkage between core and non-core resources, as stated in paragraph 37 of document DP/1997/15. One delegation, also on behalf of another, suggested that funding on a more predictable basis, such as for a three-year cycle, could be explored. Other suggestions for innovative funding mechanisms would be welcomed. While some speakers supported the target of doubling of the UNDP resource base, as stated in the proposals for change, others questioned the viability of that target.

107. One speaker expressed support for the government cost-sharing mechanism, which he stated had not been elaborated on in the document and thus more information on the mechanism was needed for a full debate on it. The majority of cost-sharing projects in his country related directly to sustainable human development or governance programmes.

108. One delegation informed the Executive Board that a request for increased funding to UNDP over its 1997 level, to $100 million, had been made for 1998. His delegation supported the effective use of resources by UNDP as a means to ensure greater contributions from major donors. In particular, UNDP programmes must have a clear focus and duplication with programmes of other organizations should be minimized. Further economization might be needed, including the consideration of closing some UNDP offices.

109. Some speakers requested further information about the modalities for tapping of the private sector as an additional source of funding, as cited in paragraph 36 of document DP/1997/15. Caution was advised in relation to that

activity, as it was noted that private capital flows often went to only a small number of countries.

110. One delegation expressed the view that the role of UNDP at the Lyon Summit should have been included in the document.

111. With regard to UNFPA resources, many delegations welcomed the conference room paper on meeting the goals of the ICPD: consequences of resource shortfalls up to the year 2000 (DP/FPA/1997/CRP.1). Delegations noted that the paper, with its clear resource targets and goals, was a good contribution for further discussion on such issues as the ways and means for increasing core resources for operational activities. On the other hand, other delegations felt that the document suffered from certain insufficiencies: a confusion between working hypotheses and tested numbers, the imprecision of the sources, and the presentation of possible and hypothetical consequences as though they were a certainty. For those delegations, the report also erroneously presented as engagements of the international community at Cairo what were in fact provisional and estimated numbers that had been worked out by experts concerning the amount of resources that needed to be devoted to population programmes. The Executive Board requested that UNFPA refine the methodology contained in the paper and introduce it as a formal document at the third regular session 1997. A number of delegations supported the increase in programme resource allocations to Africa from 1995 to 1996. One delegation noted that proposed UNFPA initiatives on debt swaps would need to be examined in light of existing mechanisms for debt relief.

Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/36 and to decisions taken at major international United Nations conferences including implementation of the programmes of action adopted by them

112. Several delegations expressed support for the work of UNDP in relation to the implementation of the strategy outlined in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation for Development/Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) publication entitled "Shaping the 21st Century" and the linkage of that strategy with the integrated framework for follow-up to United Nations conferences. One delegation emphasized the critical importance of country-level activities in that regard, and underlined the need for UNDP, in cooperation with bilateral donors, to play a leading role in local coordination of the follow-up to conferences and the DAC strategy. The delegation also requested information on the participation of UNDP in the World Bank/OECD-DAC/United Nations seminar on indicators, to be held in Paris on 20 and 21 May 1997. Positive comment was made about the UNDP role in coordination of the follow-up to conferences at both ACC and at country levels. The conference room paper on the 20/20 concept (DP/1997/CRP.20) was welcomed. Greater information on the follow-up to the World Food Summit was sought. The Administrator's proposals for enhancing the follow-up to conferences in intergovernmental forums was requested to be issued in writing.

113. Many delegations welcomed UNFPA activities in the follow-up to international conferences and, in particular, its role as Chair of the Task Force on Basic Social Services for All. UNFPA participation in the other two ACC Task Forces was also cited positively.

Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/43

114. UNDP was encouraged to continue its cooperation with the Bretton Woods institutions, especially the World Bank. Several speakers noted their support for the formal agreements signed by UNDP with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. More detailed information on collaboration with the World Bank in poverty assessment and strategies was requested.

115. Several delegations stated that UNFPA should continue to strengthen linkages with other multilateral organizations, including the Bretton Woods institutions, and with bilateral partners. At the same time, the Fund should continue to promote and strengthen South-South cooperation. Collaboration with the World Bank at the country level should be further strengthened to ensure greater policy coherence.

Responses

116. The Administrator thanked delegations for their comments and responded to the queries raised. He noted that it was often difficult for UNDP to quantify the impact of its activities and more analysis would be undertaken in that respect. He would welcome the views of bilateral aid organizations on how to measure the relationship between resource availability and impact.

117. He emphasized the powerful link between reform in the United Nations and at UNDP. Reform at the United Nations had been carefully monitored and was taken into consideration in the change proposals put forward by UNDP. He agreed that the resident coordinator system must serve the system as a whole. UNDP must be increasingly dedicated to supporting that system.

118. In a total of 81 countries, the programming cycles of JCGP agencies would be harmonized by 1999. Although 26 programmes would still require harmonization, he stressed the strong commitment of UNDP to doing so. The Development Assistance Framework would ensure that programming cycles were harmonized.

119. He underlined the commitment of UNDP to common premises and noted that the move from ownership to rental would reduce the need for hiring real estate consultants. Some 17 commitments from other funds and programmes had been made to broadening the pool of resident coordinators. He cited the lack of response to advertisements for certain posts as a contributing factor to the move to widen the pool. An informal mechanism to explore the differences among JCGP members information systems had begun to operate in April.

120. The Administrator stated that UNDP would reach out to emerging donors for contributions to core resources. He was cautiously optimistic that some progress would be made in that area, but emphasized that contributions from traditional donors could not be replaced. UNDP would proceed cautiously in raising money from private sources. He confirmed that UNDP was contributing its ideas to the discussion at the Economic and Social Council on innovative sources of financing. He noted that the decline in core contributions was linked to an overall decline in official development assistance (ODA). The United Nations share of ODA must be increased. In that regard, UNDP could manage twice the

amount of resources it had at the present time. He welcomed an informal discussion with the Executive Board on resource mobilization. In response to the query raised, he stated that increased contributions to core could indeed provide an impetus to increased non-core contributions, as cited in paragraph 37 of the document. He informed the Board that he would make a separate presentation on programme delivery later in the session.

121. In response to queries raised, he noted that UNDP had played a role in both the Lyon Summit and in developing the DAC strategy. The follow-up to the World Food Summit as a more recent conference had not moved along as far as that of the other conferences. He noted that the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and ACC had agreed that the follow-up would occur within the framework of the integrated follow-up to conferences.

122. The Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration), in response to a query raised, explained that at present, programmes and subprogrammes and some projects were approved by the Programme Review Committee. UNFPA would strive towards greater decentralization in order to enable the country offices to approve all projects and the details of the subprogrammes. With regard to collaboration with the World Bank, he noted that such collaboration was well established through work at the country level in programme development and in consultations between World Bank officials and UNFPA geographical division heads on strategies aimed at ensuring coherence. UNFPA and the World Bank also collaborated, inter alia, in South-South cooperation and in the Global Contraceptive Commodity Programme. UNFPA was working with the World Bank and OECD/DAC on refining indicators for sustainable development.

123. The President informed the Executive Board that the issue of resource mobilization in UNDP would be taken up in informal consultations in June 1997.

124. The Executive Board took note of the reports of the Administrator on reports to the Economic and Social Council (DP/1997/15) and the report of the Executive Director to the Economic and Social Council (DP/FPA/1997/10 (Part V)) and the comments made therein, and decided to transmit the reports to the Economic and Social Council.

B. Internal oversight and accountability

1. UNDP

125. The Administrator introduced the addendum to his annual report for 1996 on internal audit and oversight activities (DP/1997/16/Add.6). The UNDP comments on the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) were provided in document DP/1997/CRP.20.

126. Delegations welcomed the first annual report of the Administrator on internal audit and oversight. The report was comprehensive and demonstrated the increased attention to strengthening internal oversight and the overall accountability culture in UNDP. There was wide support for the continued practice of having a separate section of the report of the Administrator on internal audit and oversight. Some speakers requested that future reports

include information on lessons learned and best practices in the area of internal audit and oversight.

127. The staff shortage in the Division for Audit and Management Review (DAMR) was of great concern to many delegations and would be examined carefully in the context of the discussion on the next biennial budget.

128. Some speakers requested more information on how the change management process would affect the internal audit and oversight functions, including with regard to decentralization. The need for appropriate staff training was underlined. One delegation, also on behalf of another, requested further information on how goal achievement would be assessed and monitored.

129. Several delegations underlined the need to strengthen oversight of nationally executed projects. The intention of DAMR to follow up on the issues that arose from the national execution audit missions, as described in the document, was welcomed. One speaker expressed the view that a standardized format could be created for investigations undertaken by funds and programmes in accordance with that of OIOS. One delegation requested an update on the Reserve for Field Accommodation.

130. One delegation stated that it could not accept the reference in paragraph 19 of document DP/1997/16/Add.6 regarding the relationship between resident coordinators and United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) Directors, as any change in that relationship was contingent upon the reform measures to be proposed by the Secretary-General. The speaker requested that in taking note of the report, the Executive Board should have a reservation on that paragraph.

131. Queries were raised on a number of issues raised in the report, including on the implications of outsourcing of internal audits, best practices in situations where banking services did not exist, audit services for the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and the 17 per cent of recommendations from audits that were not accepted. More information on certifying and approval functions was also requested.

2. UNFPA

132. For consideration of agenda item 8, the Executive Board had before it the report of the Executive Director for 1996: UNFPA internal audit and oversight activities in 1996 (DP/FPA/1997/10 (Part IV)). The UNFPA comments on the Secretary-General's report on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, as contained in document A/51/801, were provided in conference room paper DP/FPA/1997/CPR.4.

133. The Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) introduced the report, highlighting recent initiatives taken by UNFPA to strengthen internal oversight mechanisms. A critical step to that end had been the establishment of the Office of Oversight and Evaluation, which fulfilled central oversight functions and ensured, among other tasks, follow-up to the findings of audit and oversight exercises with fund-wide implications. Regarding internal audit coverage, he emphasized that not only the quantity but the scope of activities had expanded significantly in 1996, including in-depth reviews of procedural issues by the Audit Section. Major audit findings included weaknesses in

programme management, especially inadequate management of legal documents of projects and project audit requirements. Corrective actions taken to address these weaknesses were nearing completion. The Deputy Executive Director also noted that ratings for compliance and internal controls in the 53 UNFPA offices audited in 1996 were, in general, satisfactory, and he reiterated the commitment of UNFPA to sound internal oversight.

134. Delegations welcomed the first annual report of the Executive Director on internal audit and oversight and noted its usefulness for dialogue on these important issues between the Board and UNFPA. One delegation requested additional information about the organizational arrangements between the internal audit function and the Office of Oversight and Evaluation in UNFPA. Since the auditing cycle was not considered optimal in the report, more information was requested about the staff resources available in the Audit Section and how the constraints were being addressed. More information was also requested on the substance of audit activities and problems found. It was pointed out that weaknesses discussed in the UNFPA report showed that recommendations of the United Nations Board of Auditors had not yet been implemented. References were made to the discussion of the report of the Board of Auditors at the first regular session of the Executive Board in January 1997 and the Board's decision at the time to receive annual follow-up reports on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors.

135. One delegation questioned the largely positive ratings for country offices, only four of which had been found deficient by the contracted audit firms. The delegation asked for clarification on the ratings in the context of quality concerns expressed about contract audits. Questions were also raised about the inspection and investigation functions in UNFPA which had not been addressed in the report. Regarding the issues of resources, one delegation foresaw the strengthening of capacity only in the context of the continued integration of the UNFPA internal audit function in the UNDP Division for Audit and Management Review (DAMR). Several delegations suggested that, in the future, the format of the UNFPA report should follow more closely that of UNDP.

Response of the Administration

136. The Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) noted that the UNFPA report had to be read in conjunction with the report of the Administrator, since DAMR/UNDP was also the internal audit arm of UNFPA, as emphasized by the Director, DAMR. Thus, certain aspects were not reiterated. In that role, DAMR/UNDP also provided inspection and investigation services for UNFPA, as needed. Concerning staffing levels, he explained that the UNFPA Internal Audit Section was composed of two Professionals (including the Chief of the Section) and one support staff. Despite such limited staff resources, increases in audit coverage had been achieved through the use of the UNDP Regional Service Centres in Harare and Kuala Lumpur and through the recruitment of consultants.

137. With regard to the requests for more substantive information on audit findings and follow-up since the first regular session 1997, the Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) stressed that the reports of the Board of Auditors drew explicitly on internal audit findings, as all internal audit communications were shared with the External Auditor. Thus, the substance

of the audit findings were indeed well known to the Executive Board. However, he emphasized that progress had been made and that many initiatives mentioned by UNFPA at the first regular session were now nearing completion, such as the financial management review and the thematic evaluation of execution modalities, which included national execution. Additional measures to ensure compliance with project audit requirements under national execution had also been discussed at length with the External Auditor on the previous day. Given the scope of the changes under way, it was hoped that the new procedures would become operational by the third quarter of 1997.

138. The Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) requested the President to invite the Chief of the UNFPA Office of Oversight and Evaluation to provide additional information about the work of the Office of Oversight and Evaluation in the context of the current discussion.

139. The Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) noted that the functions of the Office of Oversight and Evaluation had also been discussed in more detail under agenda item 3 of the current session. He emphasized that the Office had been established, inter alia, to analyse the findings and recommendations of oversight exercises, including internal and external audit reports, mid-term reviews and evaluation reports to identify issues where action at the organizational level was needed with respect to policy or procedural development. In addition, the Office managed policy application reviews in UNFPA country offices to look at compliance with policies and procedures. Such reviews were also intended to examine the relevance of policies and procedures for UNFPA field operations. Finally, the Office managed ad hoc independent evaluations, using experts recruited from outside of the Fund as evaluators. She mentioned that coordination meetings had taken place with the Board of Auditors and the Internal Audit Section to coordinate work plans. Policy application reviews would be combined with one external and one internal audit mission in 1997 to explore how synergies could be maximized. Regarding staff resources, the Office was composed of the Chief, four Professionals and four support staff.

3. Comments on the report of the Secretary-General

140. The Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services addressed the Executive Board. He noted the significant changes in oversight functions during recent years. The record achieved so far by the OIOS had led to an increased awareness of issues concerning internal oversight throughout the United Nations system. He recalled the discussion at the second regular session 1996 on the then draft report of the Secretary-General on enhancing internal oversight in the operational funds and programmes, which had been issued as document A/51/801. The goal of the report of the Secretary-General was to create a common framework for internal oversight functions throughout the United Nations. He commended the Administrator and the Executive Director for their first annual reports on internal audit and oversight activities. With regard to the comments of UNDP and UNFPA on the report of the Secretary-General, he noted that the Administrator was in general agreement with the direction of the report. He commended the Administrator for the action already taken in implementing the recommendations in the report.

141. Many delegations requested that UNDP implement the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on internal oversight mechanisms in operational funds and programmes (A/51/801) as early as possible.

142. One speaker noted that the internal oversight mechanisms in individual funds and programmes had developed at different paces. One delegation queried whether the Under-Secretary-General had any comments on the discussion of the World Food Programme (WFP) report on internal oversight at its Executive Board, as it had taken place prior to those of UNDP and UNFPA. Another delegation sought information about a possible overlap in the activities of OIOS and the United Nations Board of Auditors.

143. A few speakers were concerned that recommendation 7 of document A/51/801 would not allow the Executive Board, as the primary legislative body for UNDP and UNFPA, to undertake its proper governance role. One speaker noted that his delegation did not support recommendations 7 and 8 of document A/51/601, stating that those proposals could weaken and limit internal oversight mechanisms in funds and programmes. A query was raised about the mandate of OIOS in relation to the funds and programmes.

144. The Under-Secretary-General for Internal Oversight Services responded to the comments raised. He stated that he was generally pleased with the approach WFP had taken with regard to internal oversight. He stated that the management oversight committee in UNDP had been operating effectively. With regard to possible overlap in oversight functions, he preferred to view them as synergistic rather than duplicative. Experiences were being shared between the Division of Audit and Management Review and OIOS, and in some cases efficiencies could be achieved by providing services for one another, especially at the country level. In response to queries about the reporting channels, he stated that OIOS reports were submitted to the General Assembly for its information. He maintained that the Executive Board would continue to fulfil its general oversight role with regard to UNDP. He did not agree with the interpretation of General Assembly resolution 48/218 (b) of one representative, who had stated that OIOS did not have a United Nations-wide mandate. In that regard, the authority of OIOS extended to the separately administered funds and programmes. However, the authority of the office was understood as an authority complementary to existing internal oversight mechanisms in the individual funds and programmes. It was not meant to render ineffective or replace the internal mechanisms of those funds and programmes. The philosophy of OIOS was to give an example of cooperation and coordination in the internal oversight field that would be in the best interests of Member States.

145. The Director, DAMR responded to the queries raised on behalf of UNDP and UNFPA. He underlined that DAMR had control and supervision over outsourced services. With regard to follow-up, some recommendations could be confirmed as having been taken up only when another audit took place. DAMR worked closely with contractors to ensure quality audits and had arranged for follow-up audits of UNDP or UNFPA offices which had not received satisfactory ratings from the sub-contractors. He noted there were few alternatives to the present system in countries with no banking services. On national execution, he stated that the audit findings had been shared with the Office of Evaluation and Strategic Planning (OESP). He noted that OESP evaluated the achievement of

programmes/projects objectives while DAMR examined management systems and the efficient use of resources. He confirmed that a shortage of staff resources was a serious issue as it hindered adequate auditing services for UNDP, UNFPA and the United Nations Office for Project Services. DAMR was undertaking management reviews of the certifying and approving and of the procurement functions. The issues that arose with regard to national execution would be a subject that could be included in the 1998 report to the Executive Board. He noted that internal audit and oversight functions pertaining to decentralization would be undertaken in the context of the accountability framework which was under review by the Executive Board. The Director informed the Board that he would respond to specific individual queries in writing on a bilateral basis.

146. The Executive Board approved the following decision:

97/16. Internal audit

The Executive Board

1. Welcomes the format of the reports on internal audit of the United Nations Development Programme (DP/1997/16/Add.6) and of the United Nations Population Fund (DP/FPA/1997/10, Part IV);

2. Takes note of the content of these reports and of the observations made by delegations during the debate;

3. Supports the proposals of the Administrator and Executive Director to strengthen the internal audit function of the United Nations Development Programme and of the United Nations Population Fund.

23 May 1997

UNDP SEGMENT

VIII. UNDP: ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATOR

Introduction, main programme record, Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People, statistical annex, reports of the Joint Inspection Unit

147. The Administrator introduced the introduction to his annual report for 1996, the main programme record, and sections on assistance to the Palestinian people, the statistical annex, and reports of the Joint Inspection Unit (DP/1997/16/Add. 1,3,5 and 8). The introduction and main programme records were presented in a new format aimed at addressing the concerns of the Executive Board for a more focused, analytical and issues-oriented report. The methodology used was to identify achievements, constraints and actions taken with regard to constraints. He noted that for future annual reports, the quality would be further improved in the areas of data collection, systematic analysis throughout the year, and greater linkage with lessons learned from

evaluation. The year reviewed had been a year not only of change but also of great output and increased productivity.

148. Following a brief overview of the issues contained in the annual report, the Administrator outlined the efforts of UNDP in the three priority areas of poverty eradication, gender mainstreaming, and delivery and resources. He also noted that UNDP would be reporting to the Executive Board in 1998 on the experience gained in implementing the new programming arrangements. The current resource situation, he underlined, would complicate the implementation of Executive Board decision 95/23 as the incentive system envisaged under that decision was being compromised by a low level of resources. The gap between the needs of programme countries for UNDP-supported operational activities in the areas of concentration adopted by the Board and the core resources available was widening. An appropriate funding strategy for UNDP that would ensure greater availability and predictability of core resources would be discussed in informal consultations during June. In closing his remarks, the Administrator praised the efforts of UNDP staff on improving performance while preparing to implement change, in particular those who worked at the country level. UNDP was committed to building on the work accomplished in 1996 and, in the context of the implementation of change, hoped to achieve significant progress in the year ahead.

149. Many delegations praised the improvement in the format and content of the annual report of the Administrator, citing its increased analysis of constraints faced, enhanced focus, and inclusion of lessons learned. The statement of the Administrator was also welcomed. The three priority areas were crucial and could be fully supported. Some speakers stated that more could be done to address the constraints faced, including strengthening the focus on sustainable human development. One speaker emphasized the need to produce an annual report that could be communicated to a wider audience.

150. Several speakers underlined the need for UNDP to take into account the development priorities of programme countries. Particular activities undertaken by the respective regional bureaux were recognized in a number of interventions. The need to align staffing of country offices among the regions as well as the level of leadership of the regional bureaux, as legislated in the Consensus, was underlined by several delegations. One speaker requested the Administrator to inaugurate the Bratislava support centre in July 1997. The added value of national human development reports was underlined by several speakers.

151. Several speakers expressed support for the Administrator's proposals for change, in particular the steps taken to strengthen audit and accountability and strengthening of the resident coordinator system.

152. Despite the many constraints that remained in the area of poverty eradication, the work of UNDP, particularly in comparison with other funds and programmes, was welcomed. The sharpening of the UNDP focus would help to move the organization in the right direction. The usefulness of public/private partnerships and the need for closer cooperation with the World Bank and other organizations in poverty eradication were underlined by many speakers. In that regard, some speakers stressed the need to develop a common set of indicators on poverty eradication, in particular in cooperation with the Organization for

Economic Cooperation for Development/Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC).

153. The decrease in core funding was lamented by many delegations. In order to support continued and increased funding to core resources, one delegation underlined the need for transparency and accountability, as well as publicity about results, in order to obtain public support. Some speakers noted that while they did not oppose the use of non-core funding, an adequate level of core funding was necessary, and in that regard, agreement on the size of the core budget should be reached. One speaker drew attention to the large amount of resources obtained through cost-sharing in Latin American programmes and expressed some doubt that it could be considered resource mobilization since it was not additionality. Clarification of the reference to country offices providing support to nationally executed projects was also sought. The funding strategy paper should contain scenarios with the consequences of different funding levels. Further information on expenditure by region in sectoral areas was requested. One speaker underlined the need for UNDP to make economies wherever possible, including through the closure of country offices. One delegation sought further information on the use of Global Environment Facility resources, including its Small Grants Programme, in the Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States region.

154. Measures to improve programme delivery were commended. Some speakers noted the need to combine an increase in delivery with an emphasis on the quality of the programmes. Reports on problems in programme delivery should be given by all regional bureaux.

155. While many speakers supported the increased links with non-governmental organizations, some underlined the need to pursue linkages with civil society only at the discretion of Governments. More information on the modality for NGO execution of projects was sought.

156. One delegation requested further information on the role of the United Nations Development Fund for Women in assisting UNDP in gender mainstreaming. The strategy of UNDP with regard to gender mainstreaming must be strengthened, some speakers stated. In that regard, the use of United Nations Volunteer specialists as gender advisers could only be a temporary measure. Speakers also underlined the need to attain previously set goals with regard to gender parity in UNDP.

157. Speakers sought more information on the activities of UNDP at the country level within the UNAIDS programme, on assistance to countries in special situations, on the expected value added of the FIMS module, and on the role of UNDP in microfinance programmes. One speaker underlined the importance of the International Vaccine Institute as a positive example of South-South cooperation. The linkage of United Nations missions to Internet access by UNDP was commended.

United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa

158. The Acting Director of the Regional Bureau for Africa introduced the annual report of the Administrator on the United Nations System-wide Special

Initiative on Africa (DP/1997/16/ADD.2). He emphasized the high priority given to ensuring ownership and leadership of the Initiative by Africa, and the sustainability of the United Nations system commitment to support that objective. He noted agreement reached on utilizing round-table and Consultative Group processes as appropriate resource mobilization mechanisms and sector investment programmes as a means of channeling resources into priority areas of education, health, water and food security at the country level. Examples of country-level Special Initiative activities were provided in the statement. In looking to the future, the Acting Director underlined the need to focus on increased country-specific activities, continued advocacy at the highest levels of intergovernmental mechanisms, implementation of appropriate communications strategy, continuation of the work to utilize the Special Initiative as an implementation mechanism for the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa (UN-NADAF), and the adoption of realistic benchmarks for monitoring, measuring and evaluating progress in the implementation of the Special Initiative.

159. The Administrator underlined the active participation of the United Nations system, including the Bretton Woods institutions, in the Special Initiative. He noted progress being made in the priority areas of education, health, water, governance, and the organization of the African Governance Forum to take place in Addis Ababa in July 1997. He also cited the linkages between the Special Initiative and the recommendations of the mid-term review of UN-NADAF, as well as other bilateral and multilateral donor initiatives, such as the Tokyo International Conference on African Development II, the OECD/DAC publication entitled "Shaping the 21st Century"; and aspects relating to resource mobilization.

160. Many delegations cited positive aspects of the Special Initiative, such as the collaboration between organizations and agencies of the United Nations system and in particular, the overall priority given to African ownership and leadership. It was hoped that progress and tangible results could be shown in the future, especially at the country level. The Special Initiative was seen as being fully in line with ongoing United Nations reforms.

161. While there was overall support among delegations in favour of the Special Initiative, several speakers stated that greater efforts were required in the areas of information and resources mobilization. Reporting on the Special Initiative by the World Bank and the Regional Commission for Africa would be desirable. One delegation suggested that the South-South cooperation should be enhanced in the context of the Special Initiative.

162. Queries were raised regarding the initiatives of the Organization to harmonize business law in Africa (OHADA), prospects for funding of the Special Initiative, coordination with UN-NADAF, and the participation of the World Bank. Some delegations requested further information on the comparative advantages of the sector investment programmes approach. Enhanced dialogue with the Executive Board on progress in the implementation of the Special Initiative was encouraged.

163. The Acting Director noted that UNDP shared many of the concerns raised by delegations. The coordinated effort of the United Nations system to enhancing

technical cooperation with Africa was sought. He commented on the resource mobilization issue, consultations with the Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the least developed countries (OSCAL) on linkages between the Special Initiative and UN-NADAF, and the responsibility of African countries in identifying the sectors in which they wished to undertake activities under the Special Initiative. The resource mobilization targets did not represent only additionality but also included what Governments intended to fund within a certain sector. Consultations with OSCAL had demonstrated linkages between the original goals of the UN-NADAF and the recommendations of its mid-term review. Appropriate support was being extended to OSCAL to strengthen their capacity to help in operationalizing the link between UN-NADAF and the Special Initiative. The World Bank worked with other United Nations agencies in adopting sector investment programmes as mechanisms for channeling resources to certain priority areas at the country level. The typology adopted allowed for all countries to be eligible to participate and benefit from the Special Initiative. The African Governance Forum, being organized for July 1997, would allow African countries to present their governance programmes, share information and experience among themselves and with their external partners with the view to mobilizing resources.

164. The Administrator underlined the main objective of the Special Initiative: to ensure that the United Nations system acts together in the implementation of the Cairo Plan of Action on African Development. It was hoped that more resources for Africa could be mobilized through networking and greater collaboration among development partners. These resources needed to be spent more efficiently and should result in greater additionality over time.

165. The President suggested that the Executive Board continued to hold informal discussions on the Special Initiative. In that regard, a delegation proposed that an informal meeting be convened during the time of the Special Session of the General Assembly in June 1997.

166. The Executive Board took note of the annual report of the Administrator on the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa (DP/1997/16/Add.2) and comments made thereon.

Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People (PAPP)

167. The representative of Palestine expressed gratitude for the assistance provided by UNDP. He underlined the deterioration of the economic situation during 1996 in the Occupied Territories, a factor which would endanger the peace process in the region and urged the international community to promote an environment in the region that would enable the peace process to continue. The use of "West Bank and Gaza" in document DP/1997/16/Add.3 should be replaced with "Occupied Territories". Another delegation, while praising the work of PAPP, requested that the Executive Board avoid political discussions while reviewing the report.

168. Several other speakers commended the work of PAPP. The severe economic downturn in the Occupied Territories caused by the closing of its borders was of great concern. Employment generation and environment projects assisted by UNDP were having an impact. Information on cooperation by UNDP with the United

Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and on support to governance and institution-building was sought.

Response by Administrator

169. The Administrator thanked the Executive Board for the comments made on the annual report for 1996. Contributions for the core budget for 1996 and 1997 had been calculated on the basis of 1995 exchange rates, he noted, which had been responsible for the decline between 1996 and 1997 in core contributions. He agreed that the results of activities funded by core contributions should be projected more vigorously and stated that a new format for the illustrated annual report would report those results to a wider audience. Resources for publicity were quite limited, however. As for non-core contributions, he informed the Board that their distribution did not differ radically from core contributions in terms of focus areas.

170. Progress had been achieved in reaching gender targets in staffing although it was hoped that faster progress would be made. He cited the total of 12 female resident representatives serving at present, whose number was anticipated to reach 30 in 1998. In response to another query, he noted that some 40-45 per cent of resident representatives had served in United Nations organizations other than UNDP. By the end of 1997, it was expected that 17 staff members from other United Nations organizations would be offered positions as resident coordinator.

171. Collaboration in all but 15 countries on national human development reports was expected in 1997.

172. The PAPP was an excellent example of multi-bi cooperation and a useful model for other situations with large amounts of non-core funding.

173. The Associate Administrator, in response to a query, explained that country strategy notes were a result of General Assembly legislation, with the formulation entirely up to the Government concerned. The advisory note was a UNDP-owned document that was based on consultations with its partners. The Government determined the form of the country cooperation framework. Consultations on advisory notes were held with bilateral and multilateral donors as well as civil society organizations. The draft advisory note was approved by the Programme Management Oversight Committee and then sent to the country office for transmittal to the Government. The Government then decided on the content of the country cooperation framework. With regard to an enhanced role for UNIFEM in gender mainstreaming in UNDP, he noted that the proposals for change included UNIFEM in the operational cluster. Enhancement of the interaction of the Fund with regional bureaux, the Special Unit for Technical Cooperation for Developing Countries, and the United Nations Capital Development Fund was sought. One method of increasing that interaction would be through the representation of UNIFEM on the Programme Management Oversight Committee.

174. With regard to programme delivery, the Associate Administrator referred to the references to programme quality contained in the Administrator's "Direct Line 12" sent to all resident representatives. In 1997, delivery was expected to reach $681.7 million. He informed the Board that delivery figures referred

to expenditures. He noted, with regard to delivery, that if there was no indication of an increase in resources to the core budget, delivery would have to be slowed in future years. If resources remained as they were, UNDP would have to slow its programme delivery or would face the risk of running out of money and having to draw from the operational reserve. The FIMS budget module would be operational on 1 July 1997, allowing for better tracking of how resources were spent in each sectoral area.

175. In response to the query raised, the Associate Administrator noted that the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support and the United Nations Capital Development Fund had been requested to propose methods of synergy in their work in microcredits.

176. The Assistant Administrator and Director for Latin America and the Caribbean, in response to a query raised, stated that cost-sharing was a means of mobilizing resources for sustainable human development. Administrative costs in country offices in the region had been lowered, with the regional average at about 10 per cent.

177. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support noted that the issue of UNDP participation in the UNAIDS programme would be taken up under a separate item. In response to another query raised, he stated that resources would be available from the Global Environment Facility for the Eastern Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States region.

178. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Resources and External Affairs informed the Executive Board that the annual report of the Administrator had been prepared in consultation with Board members. Suggestions for further improvements would be considered. The focus and targets with regard to public information materials would be improved.

179. The Special Representative of the Administrator informed the Executive Board that PAPP worked with UNRWA in employment and job creation schemes, water projects and education. He thanked the Government of Japan for its contributions to the Programme.

180. The Executive Board took note of the annual report of the Administrator (DP/1997/16, Adds. 1,3,5 and 8) and the comments made thereon. The Board also took note of the report of the Administrator on the outcome of the High-Level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation Among Developing Countries (DP/1997/L.9).

Evaluation

181. The Administrator assured the Executive Board of the importance attached to evaluation and monitoring in UNDP. He noted the follow-up to Executive Board decision 96/20 in which the Board had asked UNDP to take steps to foster the firm establishment of evaluation and monitoring in the management culture of the organization.

182. He outlined the system for selecting subjects for evaluation through a broad-based consultative process. The procedures of UNDP for monitoring and

evaluation had been streamlined and included clearer guidance on the planning and conduct of evaluations. Monitoring and evaluation had now been linked to personnel management, with staff held accountable for compliance. UNDP had led efforts to harmonize United Nations system procedures for evaluation and had taken part in a number of joint evaluation activities. The findings of strategic and thematic evaluations were now reported to the Executive Board and published for external distribution. The Administrator noted that whereas considerable progress had been made in strengthening evaluation, much more needed to be done. He expressed his concern with the levels of evaluation compliance. The change process and the need to sharpen the focus of UNDP offered special opportunities to strengthen the culture of evaluation within the organization. The Administrator would be working with the Executive Committee, the Programme Management Oversight Committee (PMOC) Secretariat, and the Office for Evaluation and Strategic Planning (OESP) to ensure further improvements in the level of compliance and in the tracking of follow-up to recommendations emanating from evaluations. He noted that OESP would remain an independent unit reporting to him directly.

183. The Director of OESP introduced the annual report of the Administrator on evaluation (DP/1997/16/Add.4), which highlighted the findings of evaluations. Those findings covered the following areas: participation of beneficiaries; clarity and realism in project and programme objectives; baseline data and performance indicators; learning culture; and multiplicity of procedures. She stated that those issues were not new, but remained paramount to the ability of UNDP to produce and demonstrate results. She indicated that the practice of compliance reporting had begun to show results. Overall compliance rates were nevertheless still not satisfactory. The reporting of compliance was, however, evidence of organizational transparency. The priorities established by OESP for the following three years included: support to training and capacity development in country offices and through them to programme countries; improving methodologies for measuring performance and impact; and promoting the dissemination and absorption of lessons learned from evaluation.

184. Delegations expressed their general satisfaction with the annual report of the Administrator on evaluation. The report indicated an improvement in quality and scope of evaluation activity and also demonstrated transparency in organizational reporting. Many speakers underscored the idea that evaluation was a mechanism for ensuring the quality of programmes and thus needed to be integrated into all stages of programme development and implementation. Evaluation was, moreover, a critical element of organizational development and transparency. Information about results was a prerequisite for future funding by donors of development assistance. It was important to strengthen the capacity of OESP in order to ensure the credibility and impact of the evaluation function.

185. Continued concern was raised by several delegations regarding the levels of compliance with evaluation requirements. The Director of OESP informed the Executive Board that some dramatic improvements in evaluation compliance had been recorded since the compilation of data for the annual report of the Administrator, in particular in the Regional Bureau for Arab States and the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support. Current evaluation compliance rates were nevertheless still not satisfactory. Efforts would be intensified to

include observance of evaluation compliance in review of managerial performance and, where necessary, sanctions would be imposed on managers whose performance was lacking in that regard.

186. Discussion continued on the importance of incorporating the findings and lessons learned from evaluations into planning and decision-making at various levels of the organization. UNDP had adopted a policy of publishing all thematic and strategic evaluations undertaken by OESP. The Director of OESP informed the Executive Board that a system for closer tracking of follow-up to individual evaluations was being developed. The planned decentralization of the central evaluation database (CEDAB) to all UNDP country offices was welcomed, as was the intended use of the Internet as a tool for the dissemination of evaluation results and for networking among country offices and programme country authorities. The new "Guiding Principles for Monitoring and Evaluation" recommended that approval of individual projects and programmes should be contingent upon demonstration that CEDAB and other sources of evaluation findings had been reviewed for lessons that could be relevant to the planned activity. In the review of advisory notes by the Regional Bureaux and PMOC, increased attention was being paid to the absorption of lessons learned and the incorporation of appropriate mechanisms for programme monitoring and evaluation.

187. Many delegations supported the intention of UNDP to intensify its efforts to develop methodologies for the assessment of the human development impact that emanated from its projects and programmes. Several speakers emphasized the importance of harmonization of donor procedures, and, in that connection, welcomed the planned joint evaluation activities of UNDP with other United Nations agencies and with bilateral donor organizations. Efforts aimed at national evaluation capacity development in programme countries were welcomed and encouraged.

188. The Director of OESP thanked the speakers for their comments and suggestions. She assured them that OESP would support the Administrator in ensuring further improvements in the level of evaluation compliance and UNDP would improve its tracking of follow-up in evaluation exercises. She noted that evaluation was only one component of good management practice and that the effectiveness of the evaluation function was linked to many aspects of organizational culture and practice. The ultimate objective of evaluation was support to organizational effectiveness and programme quality rather than the conduct of evaluation for its own sake. The Office would seek to develop further its methodological approaches and guidance in order to ensure the highest level of professional conduct.

189. The President stated that the Executive Board had seen evidence of improvement in the UNDP evaluation function but that more work remained to be done.

190. The Executive Board took note of the Administrator's report on evaluation.

Change management

191. The Administrator, in introducing UNDP proposals for change management (DP/1997/16/Add.7), opened the session with a statement in which he underlined

that the purpose of change was to give full effect to the mandate and mission received from the Executive Board and not to introduce new policy directions. He provided a reflection of the broad features emerging from the consultative process with the Executive Board stressing that: (a) UNDP would capitalize on its operational role at the country level; (b) the new UNDP headquarters would organize itself to meet its mandate efficiently and effectively; (c) UNDP would institutionalize a corporate culture of greater efficiency, transparency and accountability; (d) recognizing that its own resources alone were insufficient to make a significant impact on poverty eradication, UNDP would seek to use its resource base to catalyse more funds for nationally defined sustainable human development (SHD) activities; (e) UNDP would enhance its programme focus within the SHD framework according to principles adopted by its Executive Board; and (f) the new UNDP would actively support and fit into the process of United Nations reform. The Administrator then highlighted a series of measures that had been, or would be, undertaken to prepare for the implementation phase, emphasizing the unique staff capacity throughout UNDP.

192. All delegations expressed their appreciation for a useful and transparent consultative process. Many stated that they supported, in principle, the change recommendations proposed. In particular, delegations approved of the direction of change in the areas of decentralization, delegation of authority to the country level, the simplification of rules and procedures, and enhanced efficiency and accountability. Several speakers commended the decision of the Administrator to keep the Evaluation Office as a separate office, reporting directly to him with links to programme activities. There was broad support for regular reporting on the implementation of change at future sessions. Some delegations requested a consolidated assessment of reform at the country level at the annual session 1998. Others requested further work on concrete benchmarks and targets to assist the Executive Board in monitoring progress. A more detailed accounting of the cost estimates for the change process was also requested.

193. Several delegations voiced their concern that non-core resource mobilization at the country level could undermine the multilateral role and mandate of UNDP. A few speakers stated that resource utilization was as important as resource mobilization, and in that regard underlined the importance of not distracting resident representatives from their primary task of ensuring programme delivery. A concise document for the third regular session 1997 explaining the policy framework that UNDP would adopt in promoting resource mobilization was requested. Some delegations stated the view that if resource mobilization became a major task at the country level, there could be a conflict of interest between resident representatives in their role as UNDP representatives and as resident coordinators.

194. A number of delegations requested assurance that UNDP change management efforts would be compatible with the broader proposals for United Nations reform, particularly with regard to the Track II proposals of the Secretary-General, and that UNDP be flexible in adjusting to those reforms, if needed. Two delegations suggested that, with respect to the change proposals on coordination, it might be advisable to wait for the Secretary-General's wider proposals before implementing those measures.

195. Almost all delegations welcomed the proposed phased approach to the subregional resource facilities, highlighting the need to utilize national experts and during the process to take into account lessons learned. One delegation expressed concern that the facilities would have managerial responsibilities; another requested further clarification on the running costs.

196. Delegations expressed their appreciation that the Staff Council was present at the Executive Board meeting and requested that dialogue between the Board and the Staff Council take place at subsequent Board meetings. It was noted that UNDP senior managers must accept and lead change and be held accountable for achieving defined results.

197. The conference room paper "Narrowing the focus: UNDP core development services" (DP/1997/CRP.18) was welcomed. Delegations stated that they looked forward to further discussion and dialogue with the secretariat on the concept of focus at the third regular session 1997.

198. Some delegations expressed concern over the lack of equity in staffing between the regional bureaux and requested an Executive Board decision to ensure equal levels of leadership in each bureau, in particular with regard to the Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States. It was noted that the vacant post of Director of the Regional Bureau for Africa should also be filled as soon as possible. Another delegation requested that any reduction in headquarters staff not apply to the Evaluation Office; a few members requested the same for the Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States. A revised version of document DP/1997/CRP.14 on the staffing of country offices was requested for the third regular session 1997, to include information on individual countries. Several delegations pointed out the need for new management and technical skills and training for staff at headquarters and at the country level. One speaker underlined the need for UNDP to pay due attention to the very important area of public relations in contributor countries.

199. There was general agreement that all management changes that fell within the prerogatives of the Administrator be implemented forthwith. Two delegations requested a document for discussion on the link between change and policy direction, which would include risks taken, financial information and the relationship with other funds and programmes.

200. In his response, the Administrator addressed those questions relating to the main discussion topics, including resource mobilization, coordination, staff morale, subregional resource facilities and the location and reporting of the Evaluation Office. He emphasized, in particular, that resource mobilization would be carried out within the established policy framework of UNDP and without any importuning of donors or any slackening of attention to core resources. He underlined that UNDP was not proposing policy changes that would affect its mandate. With respect to coordination, the Administrator stressed that UNDP proposals were entirely within the framework of existing legislation and would be pursued with due regard to the importance given by the General Assembly to UNDP stewardship of the resident coordinator function. He appreciated the participation of the Staff Council in the discussion.

201. The Team Leader of UNDP 2001 informed the Executive Board that the initial estimate for change was about $20 million. The budget presentation at the third regular session would show the allocations and shifting of priorities among various organizational units resulting from the change process.

202. The Executive Board approved the following decision:

97/15. Change management

The Executive Board

1. Recalls the existing legal framework of the United Nations Development Programme, including General Assembly resolution 2688 (XXV) of 10 December 1970;

2. Also recalls General Assembly resolutions 47/199 and 50/120 on the operational activities for development of the United Nations system and stresses the importance of their full implementation;

3. Commends the Administrator and United Nations Development Programme staff for the change management process and its overall direction, which aims to improve the level and quality of services and the strengthening of the overall impact on development of Programme activities through, inter alia, the decentralization of decision-making and responsibilities to the country level and enhanced accountability measures;

4. Recognizes that United Nations Development Programme change management shall be undertaken within the ongoing process of wider United Nations reform;

5. Stresses that national plans and priorities constitute the only viable frame of reference for the national programming of operational activities for development within the United Nations system, and that programmes should be based on such development plans and priorities, and should therefore be country-driven;

6. Also stresses in that context the need to take into account the outcomes and commitments of relevant United Nations conferences, as well as the individual mandates and complementarities of the organizations and bodies of the United Nations development system, bearing in mind the need to avoid duplication;

7. Further stresses the importance of financial, individual and performance accountability in the United Nations Development Programme and supports the efforts of the Administrator in this regard;

I. RESIDENT COORDINATOR SYSTEM

8. Welcomes measures taken by the United Nations Development Programme to improve its capacity to support the resident coordinator system, within the context of General Assembly resolutions 32/197, 44/211, 47/199 and 50/120, and

requests the Programme to continue consultations with other funds and programmes on their respective roles and ownership in this regard;

II. RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

9. Emphasizes the importance of core resources as the foundation of the United Nations Development Programme resource base;

10. Stresses that, in pursuing resource mobilization at the request of programme countries, United Nations Development Programme country offices should not compromise their primary role of programme delivery and that such resources raised be used for programmes in accordance with country priorities and be included under an approved country cooperation framework;

III. THE IMPORTANCE OF EVALUATION

11. Welcomes the decision to establish a separate Evaluation Unit, the head of which will report directly to the Administrator and also welcomes the clearer link being made between evaluation, lessons learned and programme enhancement;

IV. HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

12. Recognizes the importance of the role that United Nations Development Programme staff must play in the change process and emphasizes that the implementation of the human resource development policy of the change management process should be in accordance with the existing provisions of the United Nations common system;

V. DECENTRALIZATION

13. Welcomes the proposals of the Administrator to strengthen the country focus and operations of the United Nations Development Programme;

14. Underlines the need for the change management process to take into account existing decisions and policies on capacity-building and national execution;

15. Supports the phased introduction of a small number of subregional resource facilities and requests the Administrator to report to the Executive Board at its annual session 2001 on an evaluation of the functions and impact of the facilities;

16. Requests the Administrator to provide an interim report, at the annual session 1998, through the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, on the budget implications, human resources implications and efficiency gains occasioned by the phased introduction of subregional resource facilities;

17. Emphasizes that, while establishing the subregional resource facilities in phases, the United Nations Development Programme shall take fully into account the diversity of regional and subregional circumstances; the need

to ensure the involvement of national expertise available within the subregion; the need to avoid duplication of work undertaken by other subregional or regional institutions; and the demand-driven nature of these facilities;

18. Requests the Administrator, in the context of the presentation of the biennial budget, to report on the criteria for staffing country offices and to identify clearly any new and/or additional functions;

VI. IMPLEMENTATION

19. Urges the Administrator, and United Nations Development Programme staff at all levels, to implement change management while maintaining the primary focus of the Programme on programme delivery and quality at the country level;

20. Requests the Administrator to incorporate, in accordance with the existing legal framework of the United Nations Development Programme, the implementation of change management fully into budgetary and corporate planning and to report thereon to the Executive Board at the third regular session 1997 in the context of the biennial budget; and to provide at that session an updated implementation plan with further developed time-bound, and to the extent possible, quantifiable targets;

21. Further requests the Administrator to report to the Executive Board on the implementation of the present decision at each session;

22. Notes the proposal by the Administrator on the further focusing of United Nations Development Programme activities and core development services that are still subject to discussions by the Executive Board without losing momentum in the change management process and programme delivery and requests the Administrator to submit a report for discussions at the first regular session 1998.

VII. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

23. Requests the Administrator to include in the report to be presented in accordance with decision 96/44 at the first regular session of 1998 further analysis of the implications resulting from the change management process on the future policy direction of the United Nations Development Programme (inter alia, the role of the Programme in implementing programmes and projects, national execution and resource mobilization at the field level);

23 May 1997

IX. UNDP: COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS

A. Africa

203. The Executive Board approved the first country cooperation frameworks for Comoros (DP/CCF/COI/1); Lesotho (DP/CCF/LES/1); United Republic of Tanzania

(DP/CCF/URT/1); and Zambia (DP/CCF/ZAM/1) on a no-objection basis. In accordance with the written request from five members of the Executive Board, the Board discussed the first country cooperation framework for Sierra Leone (DP/CCF/SIL/1).

204. The Acting Director of the Regional Bureau for Africa introduced the CCF for Sierra Leone. The Resident Representative in Sierra Leone presented an overview of the consultative process leading up to the finalization of the CCF and outlined the main facets of UNDP cooperation in Sierra Leone. She noted the important role of humanitarian assistance, which had been linked to long-term development efforts, and the useful application of the programme approach. Other noteworthy aspects were the support of donors, the role of United Nations agencies, attention to gender equity, enhanced use of United Nations Volunteers specialists, and the strengthening of local systems.

205. Delegations stated that the CCF for Sierra Leone demonstrated the positive linkage of development and peace-building. Speakers supported the priorities of the CCF. Further information was sought on impact measurement and the participation of the Government of Sierra Leone in the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for Africa.

206. The Resident Representative thanked the delegations for their comments. Sierra Leone was indeed active in the Special Initiative for Africa, she noted, in particular in the areas of education, governance and food security. She cited the close working relationship of UNDP with United Nations agencies in Sierra Leone. Greater efforts were being made in the area of measurement of impact, including through work with the Government on three national strategies. She encouraged Executive Board members to provide their expertise in that area. In response to a query raised, she noted that the United Nations Capital Development fund had been active in Sierra Leone for many years.

207. The Executive Board approved the first country cooperation framework for Sierra Leone (DP/CCF/SIL/1), with the comments made thereon.

B. Asia and the Pacific

208. The Executive Board approved the first country cooperation framework for the Islamic Republic of Iran (DP/CCF/IRA/1).

209. The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran expressed his Government's gratitude to the management and personnel of UNDP for its assistance. The framework had been the result of a lengthy process. He cited the need for ensuring sustainability for the programmes in the framework and the need to fine-tune the outlined activities with specific projects. Some statistics in the framework were not accurate, according to the representative. He hoped that the core contributions to UNDP would increase, as the decrease was having a negative impact at the country level.

C. Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States

210. The President informed the Executive Board that five written requests had been received for consideration of the CCFs for Belarus and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

211. The Executive Board approved the country cooperation frameworks for Estonia (DP/CCF/EST/1) and Lithuania (DP/CCF/LIT/1) on a no-objection basis.

212. One speaker commented that in the view of his delegation a reference contained in paragraph 22 of document DP/CCF/EST/1 was incorrect.

213. The representative of Estonia, in thanking the Executive Board for the approval of the CCF for that country, expressed the view that UNDP should maintain its presence in Estonia through the year 2000. He thanked all donors, including UNDP, for their support to Estonia. His delegation wished to state its disagreement with the statement previously made by one delegation in questioning one of the references in the CCF.

First country cooperation framework for Belarus (DP/CCF/BLR/1)

214. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (RBEC) introduced the first country cooperation framework for Belarus (DP/CCF/BLR/1), which had been requested by five delegations for discussion. The CCF for Belarus reflected the development dialogue, initiated in 1994, with important initiatives in human rights, in particular the Ombudsman institution, and innovative undertakings such as the conversion of military bases for civilian use. An initiative to expand Internet facilities in the country was also a major undertaking, reaching out to civil society in its project design with the positive support of the Government.

215. Several delegations, while expressing support for the themes and objectives of the CCF for Belarus, expressed their concern about the possibility of successfully implementing all components of the framework. In particular, some speakers had reservations about the likelihood that the human rights centre would function independently and impartially. One delegation noted that many of the activities outlined in the document would depend on Government commitment to reform. Another underlined the need to review the framework in the light of recent events in Belarus and encouraged UNDP to ensure collaboration with civil society and relevant international institutions in implementing the framework. Some delegations requested that the implementation of the CCF be carefully monitored and recommended that more information be provided by UNDP through an information note to be submitted at the annual session 1998.

216. While some delegations found the resource mobilization targets unrealistically high, several speakers, in support of the CCF, emphasized that the content of the CCF should be guided by substance and not resource mobilization potential. One delegation highlighted the possibility of interregional cooperation, particularly between the RBEC region and Latin America and the Caribbean.

217. Some speakers underlined the need for the deliberations of the Executive Board to be apolitical and concentrate only on matters within the mandate of UNDP and with reference to the needs of programme countries.

218. One delegation noted a seeming uniformity among CCFs which should be reviewed.

219. The First Deputy Minister of Economy of Belarus reaffirmed the role of the CCF as strengthening the capacity for self-development in his country. Implementation of projects would be closely monitored by the Government and by UNDP. A significant part of the CCF would be implemented by Belarus on its own and through mobilizing additional resources. He underlined the priority of his Government on governance, human rights and freedoms, which was why a human rights institution was being set up in Minsk with the assistance of UNDP and the United Nations Centre for Human Rights. A European Union special representative was enabling dialogue between the Government and representatives of civil society. Progress had been seen in relations between Belarus and international financial institutions, which proved the willingness of his country to reform its economy further.

220. The Resident Representative for Belarus reiterated the understanding of UNDP that the Government of Belarus was fully supportive of the implementation of governance, democracy and participation and that both national and international non-governmental organizations as well as civil society at large would continue to be active partners in implementation. The United Nations Centre for Human Rights would be fully involved both in substantial issues and the funding of the human rights centre. He confirmed that quarterly implementation reports would be submitted to UNDP headquarters. He also confirmed that funding had been secured from the Soros Foundation and would be in direct support of civil society. Several donors had already expressed serious interest in supporting programmes within the CCF.

221. The Executive Board approved the first country cooperation framework for Belarus, taking into account the comments made thereon, and requesting that an information note be submitted at the annual session 1998 on the implementation of the human rights component of the framework.

First country cooperation framework for Bosnia and Herzegovina (DP/CCF/BIH/1)

222. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States introduced the first country cooperation framework (CCF) for Bosnia and Herzegovina. He noted that the UNDP programme strategy outlined in the CCF focused available resources on three main areas: integrated multisectoral area-based development projects; area-targeted, sector-based projects; and policy and advisory support. He pointed out that apart from available UNDP resources, approximately $42.4 million in additional contributions had already been received from Japan, Italy, the United States, Spain and the European Union. He also explained that the UNDP programme had elicited local support and donor interest because it promoted multi-ethnic community focus and local ownership of the development process.

223. Many delegations praised the high quality of the document, including its substance and presentation. They endorsed its strategic objectives, particularly as regarded working at the local community level to rebuild capacities, confidence and economic activities. One speaker encouraged UNDP to continue to be bold in the complex environment in the country and not to be afraid of making mistakes. Another pointed out that the comprehensive financial information provided in the document should be used as an example for other CCFs.

224. Other delegations sought clarification about the comparative advantage of UNDP in Bosnia and Herzegovina and underscored the need to work in coordination with other donors. In particular, queries were raised about the collaboration of UNDP with the World Bank. One speaker asked how UNDP would square its sustainable human development objectives with the necessity to reform the country's economy through structural adjustments and other similar prescriptions. One delegation expressed concern with the programme's ambition and another the need to work with non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

225. The representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina praised and thanked UNDP for establishing an office in 1996 as it signalled the overall interest of the international community in her country and a return to relative normalcy. She also highlighted the enormous physical and human toll the conflict had inflicted and the enormous amount of resources that were required to rebuild it. She underscored her country's determination to carry out economic reforms with the support of the international communities and UNDP in particular. The representative thanked UNDP, the European Union, and the Governments of Austria and Italy for their valuable financial support to activities in a variety of social and economic areas. The representative praised Japan for its generous overall funding commitment of $130 million, of which $30 million was channelled through UNDP.

226. The Resident Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in response to the various queries and comments, emphasized the excellent strategic cooperation between UNDP and the World Bank. As concrete examples, he cited the rapid mobilization of UNDP-funded damage assessments, which had enabled large capital investment projects in the health and education sectors to proceed as well as other complementary initiatives such as the establishment of aid coordination and debt management units in Republica Srpska. Those activities were also described as examples of the comparative advantage of UNDP. In an environment where many donors concentrated their support on physical reconstruction, UNDP provided valuable complementary expertise which rebuilt capacity as well as the social fabric. Gorni Vakuf was cited as a case in point of a locality that had overcome its interethnic rivalry with the help of the UNDP presence and approach. He underscored that UNDP had supported economic transition in the country by providing it with alternative expertise. UNDP was committed to working with NGOs in the country. He clarified that the cost-sharing referred to in the document had been approved by Italy, Japan, Spain, the United States, and the European Union. He thanked the delegations for their positive remarks and expressed his willingness to face the enormous challenges awaiting UNDP in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

227. The Executive Board approved the first country cooperation framework for Bosnia and Herzegovina (DP/CCF/BIH/1).

D. Arab States

228. The Executive Board approved the country cooperation frameworks for Morocco (DP/CCF/MOR/1) and Tunisia (DP/CCF/TUN/1) on a no-objection basis.

229. The representative of Morocco stated that the CCF for his country would allow reform to be carried out. He wished to pay tribute to the Regional Bureau for Arab States for the development of the CCF. The new programming procedures would strengthen the use of the programme approach. However, he wished to underline the need for the prior consent of the Government for all activities as well as the need to implement sound management guidelines.

230. In accordance with the written request from five members of the Executive Board members, the Board discussed the first country cooperation framework for Lebanon (DP/CCF/LEB/1). The Assistant Administrator and Director for the Regional Bureau for Arab States presented the country cooperation framework for Lebanon, citing the country's post-conflict recovery since 1990 and its relatively high growth rate in gross domestic product. The framework included activities in development of the country's social sectors, including health and employment generation. The Government would receive support in rehabilitation, trade, decentralization, and statistics.

231. One delegation took the floor to commend the framework for Lebanon. The targets cited in the annex were realistic and coordination with donors was excellent. The representative noted that the three areas of intervention in the CCF seemed broad. Clarification about continued support to promotion of tourism was requested. In general, more information on the use of the scant resources for Lebanon was requested. More information was also requested on the project regarding municipalities. Appreciation for the interventions in poverty eradication was noted. The programme had close links with that of UNFPA, and in that regard, the two could have been considered together by the Executive Board. The speaker requested further information on the second phase of the project in Baalbeck-Hermel. Her delegation supported the inclusion of support to small and medium enterprises in the project. The comments of the French-speaking community could have been taken into account in the formation of the CCF, including through drafting the original version in French.

232. The President agreed that the UNDP country cooperation framework and the UNFPA country programme for Lebanon could have been considered together.

233. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Arab States thanked the delegation for its comments. He noted that the interest of the Government of Lebanon in tourism development was well known. A range of activities in the CCF would support tourism directly or indirectly. As an example, activities envisaged under the broad area of environment protection were an important, indirect support to tourism development policies. The Baalbeck-Hermel project was now in its second phase and was no longer centred exclusively on agriculture. The Assistant Administrator cited new areas such as micro-credit schemes, support to small enterprises, employment, and training.

The comments of donors would be sought about the development of public administration.

234. The Executive Board approved the first country cooperation framework for Lebanon (DP/CCF/LEB/1), with the comments made thereon.

235. The representative of Lebanon expressed his Government's deep appreciation for the country cooperation framework, as well as to the Executive Board and the Government of France for their support. The CCF was linked with the themes of the "Year 2000 for Reconstruction of Lebanon" and focused on the poorest sectors of Lebanon. In that regard, the follow-up to the outcomes of recent international conferences was very important. National efforts and cooperation with donors would give impetus to the programmes. Common premises were being constructed in Lebanon.

X. UNDP: COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION PROGRAMME

236. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Resources and External Affairs introduced the item, which was being taken up in response to Executive Board decision 96/22. The Director of the Division of Public Affairs introduced the report on the UNDP information and publication policy (DP/1997/17) and gave an overview of progress achieved in the main areas of the UNDP communication and advocacy strategy.

237. Adopted in July 1995, the strategy aimed to raise public awareness of UNDP activities within the larger framework of the United Nations role in development. The Director stated that the message was articulated at two levels: through the 132 country offices of UNDP and around the intellectual leadership provided by UNDP senior management on the subject of sustainable and people-centred development.

238. The Director pointed out steps taken to improve the public information capacities of country offices: to extend outreach to media; and to strengthen advocacy and build partnerships with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), parliamentarians and other decision-makers. He described the work of UNDP work with regard to publications, electronic communication and linguistic balances. He also called attention to the need for adequate resources for public affairs work, noting that Change Management Team 7 on information and communication had also advocated increased resources.

239. Four 30-second public service announcements (PSAs) on UNDP were shown to the Executive Board.

240. Delegations expressed appreciation for the paper, as well as for the PSAs, and praised the significant progress made in UNDP communications and information in recent years.

241. Several speakers voiced reservations concerning the objectives of the strategy outlined in document DP/1997/17, including with regard to the content of UNDP publications. It was generally felt that public information activities

should be based on clear objectives and that there could be more clarity in the messages disseminated by UNDP.

242. Several delegations queried whether the communication and information programme had been subject to any monitoring or evaluation, a necessary element in determining impact on target audiences. Evaluation of work in the information field should also be ongoing, in the same way as for the overall activities of UNDP in development.

243. Delegations also cited the links between public information and resource mobilization. Publications offered a direct method of influencing decision makers in donor countries, as well as NGOs from those countries based in the developing world. Short, focused publications, tailor-made for parliamentarians and others who had little time to read were needed and could serve as tools for decision-makers. UNDP should review and analyse its publications with that in mind since some were not sufficiently targeted. Clarity, simplicity and brevity were needed, with quantity a less important factor than quality.

244. One delegation requested information on the cost of producing and distributing publications.

245. While one delegation said that large campaigns were not needed, another felt that the UNDP information programme also needed to reach the general public to gain broad support. Some delegations felt the need for a comprehensive illustrated annual report.

246. Several Nordic delegations praised the effectiveness of the work of the Nordic Liaison Office, expressing appreciation for its assistance. They also noted that the Office should be strengthened. One delegation said that she had also received positive feedback from government officials, praising the effectiveness of UNDP country offices in providing information.

247. With regard to linguistic balances, delegations spoke out for language versions of publications, including for electronic publications.

248. Questions were raised about the country-level public information activities of UNDP, including how the Public Affairs Officers were trained, how their activities were budgeted, and the basis upon which national communication and advocacy strategies were prepared.

249. In replying to the comments, the Director of Public Affairs referred Executive Board members to several sections of the UNDP Communication and Advocacy Strategy, which was distributed at the session. The strategy stated that different approaches were needed for different countries. He welcomed consultation with Board members to discuss further and develop the information and communication policy.

250. Delegations expressed appreciation for the strategy, regretting that they had not received it earlier, as it answered a number of their questions.

251. The Assistant Administrator thanked delegations for their comments, stating that while good progress had been made, there was still more to do. It

was not easy to establish an effective communication and information programme for UNDP and the impact of information was hard to measure. He agreed that an integrated approach to resource mobilization was needed.

252. The Director also stated that UNDP had to target its limited resources carefully for maximum impact, and had therefore been trying to use existing infrastructure and staff for its information work. He recognized the good work of the Liaison Offices, including the Nordic Liaison Office, which he agreed needed more resources.

253. The Executive Board approved the following decision:

97/17. UNDP communication and information policy

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the report of the Administrator on the implementation and strengthening of the United Nations Development Programme communication and information policy and the comments made thereon;

2. Welcomes the process initiated by the United Nations Development Programme in response to decision 96/22 leading to an improved strategy for communication and information policy and in this regard, recognizes the changes that have taken place since 1995 in creating better visibility and awareness for the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations system in the media and in the area of advocacy;

3. Stresses that such a strategy must be applied throughout the United Nations Development Programme and that its application should be duly monitored;

4. Emphasizes that more targeted, accurate, clear and frank public information is necessary to generate support for increased resources for the United Nations Development Programme;

5. Stresses that strategic targeting of the communication and information activities are essential to make the most effective use of resources available;

6. Also stresses the importance of maintaining linguistic balance in the electronic dissemination of information;

7. Welcomes the proposals for monitoring and evaluation which are integral and important parts of information and communication activities and need to be strengthened, taking into account the difficulty, methodologically and operationally, of measuring the impact or effectiveness of such activities;

8. Urges the Administrator to improve the focus and quality of public information on the impact of United Nations Development Programme activities at the country level and to develop new types of statistics and publications to this end, including indicators of impact;

9. Requests the Administrator to ensure that the efforts taken by the United Nations Development Programme in this regard are closely coordinated with those of the United Nations system, with a view to strengthening coherence and consistency in its communication;

10. Also requests the Administrator to submit a report at the annual session 1998 on progress in developing and implementing the communication and information policy of the United Nations Development Programme with particular reference to the implementation of the relevant change management recommendations, including budgetary implications.

23 May 1997

XI. UNDP: UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR WOMEN

254. The Director presented the Strategy and Business Plan of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) (DP/1997/18), underlining that the plan was a living document and contained guidelines for action that would be reviewed annually and modified when necessary. She thanked the Executive Board for its support, comments, questions and recommendations in developing the Business Plan.

255. The Director noted that the Strategy and Business Plan captured a strategic shift for UNIFEM as it moved to the year 2000. The shift was based on an effort to focus UNIFEM programming, emphasizing three areas of concern: strengthening women's economic capacity; promoting the realization of women's human rights and the elimination of violence against women; and engendering governance and leadership. She emphasized that the thematic areas would be addressed in relation to regional and country realities. The Director also noted that in the new phase, UNIFEM would be working on the following goals: incorporation of the principles of a learning organization; improvement of its communication, information and tracking systems; and making small but strategic investments and leveraging external resources through collaborative action.

256. The Director provided clarification on three frequently asked questions about UNIFEM and its work, including what UNIFEM meant by piloting projects, issues relating to the role of UNIFEM in gender mainstreaming, and how the Fund served as a catalyst within the United Nations system. She also outlined the work of UNIFEM within the resident coordinator system at the country level. The Director explained that UNIFEM would pilot new approaches and initiatives in order to test areas of emerging importance, develop seed projects that could be upscaled, and create opportunities to develop new methods and tools.

257. In speaking about gender mainstreaming, the Director defined the meaning of mainstreaming for UNIFEM and outlined some of its activities in mainstreaming gender. She outlined the ways in which UNIFEM was collaborating with the various parts of the United Nations system. The United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women, for example, was involved in policy and norm-setting work; the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women was focusing on research and training regarding women in

development; the gender focal points were providing advice and guidance on engendering programmes and policies within their agencies; and UNIFEM was working at an operational level to bring the lessons learned at the country level back into the United Nations system.

258. The Director outlined the UNIFEM mandate to support the resident coordinator system, which was based on the report of the Secretary General on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. She stated that UNIFEM support to the resident coordinator system was a means of linking women's empowerment and mainstreaming at the country level to the United Nations system. Specifically, UNIFEM would be involved in building a common database, in engendering common country assessments, and in engendering the proposed United Nations Development Assistance Framework.

259. Delegations thanked the Director for her presentation, noting that it had helped to enhance their understanding of UNIFEM and its work. Speakers commented that they were pleased to review the Strategy and Business Plan and were encouraged by the progress UNIFEM had made in strengthening itself as an organization and in prioritizing and focusing its work. The Executive Board also welcomed the idea of the Strategy and Business Plan as a living document on which UNIFEM could build.

260. Many delegations expressed their support for the Strategy and Business Plan. Many commented on the thematic focus of UNIFEM activities and the strategies through which UNIFEM proposed to undertake its work. While the majority of speakers noted that the Strategy and Business Plan provided a more strategic and sharper focus to UNIFEM work and its role in the United Nations system, two delegations suggested that the three-year work plan could be further refined and made more strategic, with clarification of the Fund's role as a catalyst. Many delegations welcomed the development of UNIFEM as a learning organization and endorsed the establishment of UNIFEM as a centre of expertise. Many speakers favoured increased funding to UNIFEM in order to ensure that it would be able to achieve the objectives outlined in the Strategy and Business Plan. One delegation highlighted the increased donor confidence in UNIFEM and in its new leadership, and suggested that more resources would be likely to come from its Government. Another delegation announced its intention to double its contribution to UNIFEM.

261. Queries were raised about the criteria according to which UNIFEM would select the countries in which it worked. The Executive Board stressed the need to balance the potential impact of UNIFEM involvement in a country with the need for work on gender equality within certain countries. The Board also emphasized the need to maintain balance between the operational work of UNIFEM at the country level and its work within the United Nations system. Some delegations expressed concern about the desired funding increase presented in the Strategy and Business Plan, asking whether the level of resource mobilization required was realistic. Suggestions were made that UNIFEM work to increase its funding from the private sector. Enhanced cooperation with the Bretton Wood institutions was encouraged. One delegation requested a list of contributors to UNIFEM with an indication of those who would increase their contributions. Queries were also raised about the ability of UNIFEM to support the resident coordinator system, given its limited number of Regional Programme Advisors.

The Fund was encouraged to collaborate with other United Nations organizations in its country-level work in an effort to mainstream gender issues.

262. The Director responded to the questions of the Executive Board by grouping them along similar themes. She commented that the Strategy and Business Plan outlined optimal and status-quo scenarios for funding in which even in the status-quo scenario (i.e., no funding increase) UNIFEM would still have a strong programme for women's empowerment. She spoke about how UNIFEM has undertaken a vigorous resource mobilization strategy. She indicated that between 1995 and 1997, 13 countries had become new donors to UNIFEM and 16 countries had increased their contribution. The Director also indicated that UNIFEM has established a resource mobilization team which was working to increase donations from the private sector, national committees, and international foundations.

263. The Director thanked the Executive Board for its emphasis on considering need in addition to potential impact in the selection of UNIFEM activities. The Director noted that UNIFEM recognized the need to maintain a balance between high impact and the needs of women when designing its programmes. The Director then reported on two Regional Strategic Planning Workshops that had been held in the Asia and Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean regions. She noted that those regional meetings had included the participation of UNIFEM Regional Programme Advisors (RPAs) in reviewing the Strategy and Business Plan from a regional perspective. She remarked that the RPAs would develop regional work plans that would build on the Business Plan, thereby placing UNIFEM activities within the regional context.

264. The Deputy Director addressed queries related to monitoring, which she noted was carried out by UNIFEM RPAs in coordination with headquarters staff. She noted that UNIFEM would be working on developing a results-based methodology which will include indicators for use in project monitoring.

265. With regard to UNIFEM thematic areas, the Director remarked that in terms of its work on economic empowerment, UNIFEM was working to ensure that women could take advantage of the opportunities presented by globalization, rather than being involved in specific job creation schemes which involved more time and financial support. She emphasized that UNIFEM was not interested in free-standing, isolated projects but rather in projects that would add to a continuum of change. She also noted that UNIFEM would continue to build on its political empowerment work. In both areas, UNIFEM would continue to build partnerships within the United Nations system in order to conduct its work effectively and efficiently.

266. The President noted, in response to a query raised, that the Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women had been invited to participate in the discussion of the UNIFEM Strategy and Business Plan. However, both she and her Deputy were scheduled to be on mission during the day of the discussion and regretted that they could not be present. One delegation asked that Ms. King, in her capacity as special advisor to the Secretary-General on gender mainstreaming and the advancement of women, could give a presentation to the Executive Board in the near future.

267. The Executive Board approved the following decision:

97/18. United Nations Development Fund for Women

The Executive Board

1. Endorses the Strategy and Business Plan of the United Nations Development Fund for Women contained in document DP/1997/18, taking into account the comments made at the Board;

2. Emphasizes that the implementation of the activities of the Strategy and Business Plan should be guided by the mandate of the United Nations Development Fund for Women;

3. Requests the United Nations Development Fund for Women to support innovative and experimental activities in implementing the Strategy and Business Plan within the context of commitments made in the Beijing Platform for Action;

4. Also requests the United Nations Development Fund for Women to develop further and strengthen its role as a catalyst with a view to strengthening the gender perspective of development programmes in recipient countries and increasing synergy with other United Nations organizations;

5. Further requests the United Nations Development Fund for Women to focus on strategic interventions and building upon its comparative advantages, in order to promote systemic change, in particular with regard to political and economic empowerment;

6. Reaffirms the role of the United Nations Development Fund for Women in linking technical expertise with policy formulation in the process of gender mainstreaming throughout the resident coordinator system;

7. Requests the United Nations Development Fund for Women to maintain a balance between potential impact and the needs of women in the application of the criteria for programme selection;

8. Encourages the United Nations Development Fund for Women to mobilize resources for its future activities from all available sources, including the private sector, and urges all Member States to contribute and to consider increasing their contributions to the United Nations Development Fund for Women;

9. Decides that the United Nations Development Fund for Women should report to the Executive Board orally in 1998 and in writing every alternate year and that the progress made by the Fund in implementing its Strategy and Business Plan should be contained in the annual report of the Administrator of UNDP.

23 May 1997

XII. UNDP: FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

268. The Administrator introduced the report on the accountability system of UNDP (DP/1997/CRP.13). The report outlined the steps taken in UNDP to create a strong culture of accountability, both for programme impact and for the optimum use of financial and human resources. The conference room paper gave an update of the elaboration and implementation of the accountability framework within UNDP, including its relevance to the UNDP 2001 change process, as well as an overview of how UNDP would align the systems and sub-systems of the accountability framework with one another and with UNDP 2001. He reviewed the components of the accountability framework as contained in document DP/1996/35. He noted that in the proposed new structure in UNDP, the Bureau for Planning and Resource Management would unite organizational planning with budgeting and resource allocation. A system of internal oversight committees was now in place. The accountability system would facilitate the proposed reforms and improvements of UNDP 2001.

269. The other main areas covered by the framework were shared values, as presented in the statement of values and the United Nations code of conduct, which were in an advanced draft stage. Those drafts were provided to the Executive Board. Competencies, or the specific skills, attitudes and behaviours that characterized outstanding performance, enabled UNDP to produce results. At the individual level, expected behaviours would be included in individual performance plans and subjected to assessment. The components of the accountability framework would improve UNDP efforts to strengthen accountability to the Executive Board, to monitor and continuously improve programme and management performance and to transform itself into a learning organization. Monitoring and learning had three dimensions: assurance, corrective action, and reward and sanction. The Division for Audit and Management Review was entrusted with the responsibility for oversight of the UNDP accountability system. The effectiveness of the system depended on its ability to take corrective action once discrepancies in performance or conduct had been uncovered. Through their oversight functions, the Programme Management Oversight Committee and the Management Review and Oversight Committee could set in motion the processes necessary for corrective actions to take place.

270. Comprehensive measures would be taken in the near future to implement the UNDP 2001 change process, which would include the elaboration of an action plan to implement the new UNDP accountability framework.

271. One delegation requested further information on the finalization of the Financial Information Management System (FIMS), on the accountability of managers of trust funds in relation to the monitoring of individual performance as cited in the conference room paper, and on the criteria UNDP would use to promote staff members in the future. The delegation also requested a demonstration of the FIMS.

272. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Finance and Administration, in response, informed the delegation that information on FIMS would be provided bilaterally. Accountability standards for trust fund managers were the same as those for other staff. He noted that there would be a good

system in place for determining promotions, one which brought all previous elements together within the accountability framework.

Country office staff allocation

273. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Finance and Administration introduced the document on information on country office staff allocation (DP/1997/CRP.14), which had been requested by the Executive Board at the second regular session 1997. In introducing the paper, he emphasized that the information provided did not reflect what the Administrator would propose as allocations for the 1998-1999 biennium, as UNDP was still in the process of developing those proposals. He said the current document therefore highlighted the issues and criteria that had been taken into account in the past, which he believed would continue to play a role in the future.

274. The Assistant Administrator noted that the allocation of staff resources was not an exact science. The document listed a number of factors that had to be taken into account in reviewing the current allocation of staff resources. In addition he mentioned that the amount of resources that were being programmed and managed by a country office, combined with the policy to preserve the capacity of the UNDP country office network as a whole, were the main criteria that had been taken into account.

275. Delegations thanked the Assistant Administrator for the report, which provided interesting and valuable information.

276. One delegation referred to the need to achieve a fair distribution of staff for least developed countries (LDCs). The table in the conference room paper did not show that staff allocation followed the level of the target for resource assignments from the core (TRAC). He stated that while 60 per cent of TRAC resources were allocated to LDCs, only 47 per cent of the staff was allocated to those countries. In looking at all low-income countries, he noted that they had only 66 per cent of the staff while they accounted for 87 per cent of the TRAC resources.

277. The same delegation expressed an understanding for the link between allocation of staff resources and the need to maintain a global country office network, in particular in a period of declining core resources. In that connection, he expressed concern with the increasing amounts of core resources being used to fund an administrative network, rather than for programme purposes. UNDP thus should consider expanding the concept of multi-country offices currently followed in covering some programme countries in the Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States. Regarding the criterion of staff resources being allocated on the ability of offices to raise extrabudgetary funds, he was concerned that the overheads earned from those additional funds did not cover their full costs. The Executive Board should be informed of the rules governing overhead costs.

278. Another speaker, while thanking the Administrator for the document, indicated that his delegation did not agree with the allocation criteria. While appreciating the fact that the allocation of staff resources was not an exact science, the delegation felt that the criteria should not be fluid and

fluctuating. Her delegation, she said, was not fully in agreement with the criteria provided. She stated that the allocation of staff resources should be a clear-cut strategy with objective rules. Her delegation wanted more work to be done, such as priority for LDCs, stating that criteria should not be applied mechanically.

279. One delegation requested confirmation that the same subject would be covered in the context of the Administrator's 1998-1999 biennial budget proposals to be presented at the third regular session 1997. The President informed the delegation that the subject would indeed be covered at that time.

280. The Assistant Administrator appreciated the comments of the delegations. He underlined the role of UNDP with its multitude of functions, and noted the recognition by the Board that 29 per cent of a country office's workload was in support of United Nations operational activities. The Executive Board would continue to be fully involved in and fully informed of the allocation of staff resources in country offices in the context of biennial budget proposals. The organization had to respond to increasing demands in a period of decreasing resources, which no doubt had made an impact in the ability to staff adequately some of the new country offices covered by RBEC. Furthermore, the Administrator in the last three bienniums had voluntarily reduced the administrative budget so as to release more resources for programme purposes.

281. The Executive Board took note of the report on country office staff allocations (DP/1997/CRP.9) and the comments made thereon.

XIII. UNDP: UNITED NATIONS OFFICE FOR PROJECT SERVICES

Report of the Executive Director

282. The Executive Director introduced his first regular annual report (DP/1997/19 and DP/1997/19/Add.1) on the activities of the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) in 1996. Noting that the report was based on the UNOPS business plan, which had been provided to the Board at its third regular session 1996, he reported that the long-term viability of UNOPS now appeared to be established, based on the solid performance of two years and the strong demand for services in the first part of 1997. Progress on staff management and personnel issues was reviewed, as well as the continued implementation of the UNOPS decentralization strategy, also based on the self-financing principle. The Executive Director also distributed an update of the statistical annex, to be made available officially as document DP/1997/19/Add.1/Rev.1, and the unaudited financial statements for the year ended 1996. The Executive Director also took the occasion to release the 1996 UNOPS annual report, which had been recently completed.

283. Twelve delegations took the floor to comment, each of which expressed satisfaction for the UNOPS performance relative to its projections, with one delegation noting the efficient combination of an enterprising corporate approach with the United Nations mandate to assist developing countries.

Delegations also expressed their satisfaction at the clarity and transparency of the report of the Executive Director.

284. Several delegations requested that in its next report UNOPS complement its quantitative performance assessment with a review of its qualitative performance, with some delegations suggesting that it also be linked with the objectives stated in the annual business plans. One delegation expressed concern with implementation of a national project, requesting that ways be found to expedite project implementation.

Executive Director response

285. The Executive Director thanked the delegations for their congratulations and encouragement, recalling that the UNOPS success would not have been possible without the efforts of the entire UNOPS team, including members of the Staff-Management Forum and staff in New York and the UNOPS outposts.

286. Responding to interest expressed by several delegations, the Executive Director distributed copies of the recently concluded Memorandum of Understanding between UNDP and UNOPS. He noted that the umbrella agreement would be followed by agreements on internal audit services and on central administrative services, both of which would be based on principles of value for money.

287. He welcomed the request of the Executive Board to provide additional information on qualitative performance, noting that the 1997 business plan would be made available at the third regular session in September. He also mentioned the progress UNOPS was making in developing materials to clarify its role and services for developing countries, further noting the recent establishment of the UNOPS web page.

288. With regard to questions concerning UNOPS policies for achieving fairness in contracting for women, nationals of developing countries, and underutilized major donors, the Executive Director clarified that the key element of UNOPS contracting was to obtain for its clients the best expertise and value available, at the best price. Nonetheless, he noted that preference was given to those groups when there was equivalence among potential contractors and consultants, adding that UNOPS was able to be more proactive with regard to staff paid from its own budget.

289. In response to a question regarding the cost to UNOPS of using calculated fee rates versus flat rates, the Executive Director confirmed that flat rates would be cheaper and easier for UNOPS to administer, but added that the transparency afforded clients by basing fees on the work to be performed was considered by UNOPS to be an advantage to the clients and therefore appropriate for a service organization.

290. The Executive Director anticipated that moderate growth was expected for the next biennium and that it would be reflected in the 1998-1999 budget to be submitted at the third regular session. He added that UNOPS would be ready to respond to stronger growth in demand than would be projected in the budget. With regard to growth in business carried out on behalf of Governments, he

explained that it was in significant measure due to the choice of Governments to use UNOPS services for projects funded from their own resources.

291. Finally, acknowledging the concern expressed by one delegation regarding a UNOPS project in that country, the Executive Director stated that he considered the concern to be a useful form of client feedback, to which UNOPS would respond, mentioning that an evaluation of that project was already scheduled to begin in the following week.

292. The Executive Board took note of the report of the Executive Director (DP/1997/19 and DP/1997/19/Add.1/Rev.1).

XIV. OTHER MATTERS

A. Emergency Assistance for the Democratic Republic of Congo

293. The Executive Board approved the following decision:

97/19. Assistance to the Democratic Republic of the Congo

The Executive Board

1. Recognizes the important work of the United Nations Development Programme in emergency assistance, including prevention, rehabilitation and reconstruction, and the supportive contributions of the United Nations Population Fund in this work;

2. Encourages the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Population Fund to continue to monitor the implications for special assistance to the Democratic Republic of the Congo;

3. Also encourages the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Population Fund to be alert to the need for inter-agency assistance activities to the Democratic Republic of the Congo;

4. Requests the Administrator and the Executive Director to report at the third regular session 1997 on activities undertaken.

23 May 1997

B. WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health

294. The Executive Board also took up consideration of conference room paper DP/FPA/1997/CRP. 5 on the draft terms of reference for the new WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health (CCH). The draft terms of reference had been drafted and agreed upon by the secretariats of the three organizations involved and had been approved by the WHO Executive Board earlier in the same week. One delegation asked if the representatives from the five regional groups on the Executive Board had been selected. The secretariat informed the Board that the

nominations of the representatives of Antigua and Barbuda, the Netherlands and the Russian Federation had been forwarded to the Board but that nominations from Thailand and Zambia had not yet been received. Another delegation, seconded by another, asked whether it would not be appropriate for the meetings of the CCH to take place in alternate years in Geneva and New York, not just in Geneva as specified in the draft terms of reference, given that the secretariats of UNICEF and UNFPA were located in New York. In light of the fact that some nominations had not been received, that the Board had not had time to review the terms of reference and that no meeting was scheduled to take place until the end of the year at the earliest, it was decided by the Board to reconsider the terms of reference at the third regular session 1997 of the Board.

C. Core allocations to 20/20

295. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support introduced the report on core allocations to 20/20 (DP/1997/CRP.19). He noted that UNDP had been associated with the 20/20 concept since its inception and also that it had been referred to in the Human Development Report. The impetus to implement 20/20 continued to grow through recognition of the concept at international forums and through the activities of a Working Group comprised of international organizations and Governments. The paper submitted to the Executive Board explained the role of UNDP, elaborated on work under way and gave plans for the future. One action that had been taken was the improvement of the internal accountability system in terms of programme category. A more in-depth report on the apportionment of resources by UNDP to fulfilling the 20/20 concept would be presented at the third regular session 1997. He noted that the 20/20 concept was included in some country cooperation frameworks. Government contributions to UNDP had facilitated the implementation of the 20/20 concept.

296. The Director of the Technical and Evaluation Division of UNFPA introduced conference room paper DP/FPA/1997/CRP.3 entitled "UNFPA's Contribution to the 20/20 Initiative". He reiterated that the Fund considered the 20/20 initiative to be very important and that it continued to participate wholeheartedly in the efforts of the United Nations system as a whole to support basic social services for all, including chairing the inter-agency task force on that effort. As was detailed in the conference room paper, all of the Fund's programme activities could be said to fall within the scope of the 20/20 initiative, specifically in the areas of population and reproductive health. Therefore, once administrative costs were subtracted, it was estimated that approximately 83 per cent of all the Fund's expenditures over the last four years had been spent on helping to provide basic social services in developing countries. He informed the Executive Board that UNFPA had taken on as a special project the collection of data on the flows of financial resources, both in terms of domestic resources and international assistance, for population and reproductive health programmes.

297. Several delegations expressed their appreciation for the presentations and the conference room papers of UNDP and UNFPA, which had been requested at the second regular session 1997. The serious effort of both organizations to implement the concept was appreciated. It was noted that UNDP was having difficulty in measuring the amount of its resources devoted to 20/20. It was hoped that further refinement of the concept would allow for a better

determination of the subjects that could be included in 20/20. Increased collaboration with the Bretton Woods institutions and other United Nations organizations was encouraged. Further information on the progress of the UNDP Poverty Strategies Initiative was requested. The representative of Norway informed the Executive Board of plans to have a follow-up meeting, to be held in a developing country, to review the 20/20 concept two years after its inception.

298. One delegation noted that the 20/20 concept was a useful tool for addressing social issues in programme countries. The work of UNDP was welcomed, including with regard to social problems linked with structural adjustment programmes. The speaker pointed out that programme countries with debt obligations often had limited resources left for spending on social programmes.

299. The Assistant Administrator thanked the Executive Board for its comments. He cited the cooperation of UNDP with UNICEF and the World Bank in connection with the 20/20 concept. UNDP was working with the World Bank on utilizing new information technologies to assist programme countries. In that regard, a major conference on communications technologies would be convened in Canada in June 1997. Overcoming the problems posed by debt burdens of developing countries was indeed a key hurdle in implementation of the concept.

300. Following the discussion by the Executive Board, the Director commented on three points that had been made by delegations. In response to the request made by one delegation, and supported by another, he informed the Board that UNFPA was already working with UNICEF on country case studies. In response to another intervention, he said that he felt that the common country assessment would be a suitable place to carry out analyses of 20/20 expenditures. Finally, in commenting on the necessity of working with the Bretton Woods institutions, he was pleased to report that the Fund had been in close contact with the World Bank on ways to strengthen their collaboration in supporting population and reproductive health programmes in developing countries.

301. One delegation requested that the discussion of the item be continued at the third regular session 1997 in order to prepare for the follow-up meeting on 20/20 and to discuss the outcome of the special event on poverty eradication organized by UNDP during the present session.

302. The President stated that the proposals would be discussed in the Bureau.

303. The Executive Board took note of the reports of the Administrator and of the Executive Director on core allocations to 20/20 (DP/1997/CRP.19 and DP/FPA/1997/CRP.3).

D. UNAIDS

304. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support (BPPS) of UNDP informed the Executive Board that UNDP had prepared an information paper on UNDP support for and collaboration with the joint and co-sponsored United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), which was being made available to the Board. He noted the significant progress that had taken place in the first full year of operations with UNAIDS and the commitment of UNDP to work with UNAIDS and the other co-sponsoring organizations.

Particular note was taken of the speed with which United Nations theme groups on HIV/AIDS had been set up at the country level within the context of the United Nations resident coordinator system. Significant efforts had been made and would continue to be made by UNDP to support UNAIDS country programme advisors (CPAs) by providing essential administrative and other support in cash and in kind. On average, eight per cent of UNDP staff time at country level, during 1996, had been allocated in support of UNAIDS and HIV-related activities. That amount included the contributions in 20 country offices of UNDP HIV focal points, who served also as UNAIDS focal points. During 1996, financial support for UNDP-supported, HIV-related activities, including cost-sharing from the World Bank and other donors, totalled an estimated $65-70 million, of which the majority was allocated at the country level and the remainder at the regional and global levels. He outlined several specific activities undertaken in programme countries and noted the plans for meetings and workshops on the subject. In follow-up to an external evaluation of its regional activities in the area of HIV and Development in Africa, UNDP had organized a consensus-building workshop in Dakar in April 1997. The workshop had drawn wide participation and concluded that the regional activities had made a significant contribution. UNDP had also participated in collaborative programme reviews and development and training activities with bilateral agencies and non-governmental organizations. A pilot effort in Malawi and Zimbabwe was under way, in which people living with HIV/AIDS would serve as national United Nations volunteers. Additional UNDP activities involved the areas of inter-agency collaboration on performance monitoring, training for managers and personnel staff, information dissemination, and publications. Future work would build on collaborative programme development with UNDP partners. He cited some difficulties on resource allocation, owing to the differing budget structures among the co-sponsors. In UNDP, $2-3 million had been allocated to support HIV/AIDS activities at the global level and for pilot testing at the country level. Between $5-10 million was allocated for regional-level activities.

305. The Chief of the Reproductive Health Branch of the Technical and Evaluation Division of UNFPA provided the Executive Board with a brief summation of the efforts that UNFPA had been making to include HIV/AIDS prevention activities in its programmes. These had begun in 1987, when the Fund had issued its first policy guidelines on HIV/AIDS. In the succeeding 10 years, UNFPA had expanded its support in four main areas: supply and distribution of condoms; training on HIV/AIDS for reproductive health information and service providers; in- and out-of-school HIV/AIDS education; and HIV/AIDS information as a part of broader reproductive health information, education and communication (IEC) programmes.

306. The Chief of the Reproductive Health Branch drew the attention of the Executive Board to the 1996 edition of the Fund's *AIDS Update* and pointed out some of the highlights of activities that had been undertaken in 1996, including participation in theme group mechanisms set up by UNAIDS at the country level, with a number of the groups being chaired by the UNFPA Representative. He informed the Board that UNFPA had provided support for HIV/AIDS prevention activities in 124 countries in 1996, compared to 41 in 1991, and had provided about $20.5 million for such activities in 1996. The Fund had collaborated with 115 NGOs and had provided $4.1 million worth of condoms to 62 countries in 1996.

307. At the global level, UNFPA had strengthened its collaboration with UNAIDS as one of the co-sponsoring organizations and had seconded a staff member to UNAIDS for the previous two years and was continuing the arrangement for the following two years. The Fund had recently approved a project that would be cost-shared with UNAIDS to develop approaches on how HIV/AIDS prevention and management activities could be integrated into reproductive health programmes at the primary health care level. The Chief of the Reproductive Health Branch closed by saying that it had been the goal of UNFPA to make HIV/AIDS prevention the responsibility of every unit in the Fund, and he hoped that that was reflected in the *AIDS Update*.

308. The Programme Administrator of UNAIDS reported that the Programme Coordinating Board (PCB) had requested the regular reporting by UNAIDS to the governing bodies of co-sponsoring organizations and to the Economic and Social Council. The report of the Executive Director of UNAIDS to the PCB was distributed to the Executive Board. She highlighted issues that related to the work of the co-sponsors at the country level. In that regard, the 126 theme groups covering 150 countries were the major coordinating mechanism at the country level. While the World Health Organization served as chair of the majority of the theme groups, the numbers chaired by UNDP and UNFPA had increased. In addition, she noted the contribution of UNDP and UNFPA as country programme advisers in those countries where UNAIDS did not have a representative. Their success depended on the administrative and logistical support accorded to them, as well as access to financial and programmatic tools for resource mobilization and implementation of joint activities. In looking to enhance those aspects of support to the theme groups and to establish guidelines for building on existing tools, UNAIDS looked to UNDP to take the lead, as it had the most experience with inter-agency programming arrangements. At the global level, she noted that preparations for the 1998-1999 coordinated appeal were already under way, with the launch planned for June 1997. The previous appeal had not been very successful, she pointed out, and supplemental funding from the cosponsoring agencies would be required. It was hoped that the co-sponsors would clarify their roles and approaches and mainstream HIV and AIDS activities, to include funding from their core budgets. She noted the increased coordination on specific projects undertaken within UNAIDS. However, many areas still needed improvement. Some problems in that regard pertained to the different practices among the co-sponsors regarding delegation of authority to country-level representatives and the different administrative procedures. The newness of UNAIDS was also a factor, as was the lack of understanding about the how UNAIDS would function at the country level and the role of the co-sponsors in supporting UNAIDS. The PCB had recommended the issuance of guidelines, to be communicated by United Nations organizations, bilateral donors and UNAIDS to country-level staff in order to clarify roles and outputs expected. She underlined that many of the initial problems were linked to the newness of UNAIDS, the lack of financial procedures, differing practices among the co-sponsors, and the lack of agreement on the functioning of UNAIDS at the country level. Guidelines should be communicated by all parties to their country level representatives regarding the clarification of roles and outputs expected. She concluded by noting that the PCB had approved the UNAIDS workplan and budget at $120 million for core activities. The Director of UNAIDS planned to give a briefing at United Nations Headquarters in June.

309. In the discussion that followed, delegations asked how the founding of UNAIDS had affected the work of UNDP and UNFPA. They also asked what support the co-sponsoring organizations were providing to UNAIDS and whether guidelines on working with UNAIDS had been communicated to the field.

310. The Assistant Administrator acknowledged that more needed to be done with regard to mainstreaming the issue in UNDP programmes. He noted the large workload of resident coordinators, who had also suffered from staff cutbacks in recent years, a factor which could affect the functioning of some of the theme groups. Nevertheless, the formation of so many theme groups was encouraging He emphasized that the resources committed by UNDP at the global level could now be increased, as during the previous cycle, an overall cut of 30 per cent had been imposed, resulting in a constraint on spending. He underlined the commitment of UNDP to the work of UNAIDS, but noted that complications had arisen with regard to defining the role and scope of its activities when the new organization was founded. The roles were now clearer, and over the next few years an improvement in the United Nations response was likely to be seen, in particular regarding the scope of coverage in more than 100 countries.

311. The representative of UNAIDS thanked the Executive Board for its support. In response to a query, she noted that some financial support was needed for the operation of theme groups. There was no established mechanism for resource mobilization, and thus, programmatic tools needed to be developed. Consultations with UNDP on that aspect were expected in the near future.

312. The Chief of the Reproductive Health Branch replied that even though UNAIDS was only a year or so old it was already beginning to affect the Fund's work in a positive way. The HIV/AIDS theme groups that had been set up were turning out to be a very valuable way of enhancing coordination and collaboration and providing a better overall framework for the support UNFPA was providing to national programmes. At the global level, UNAIDS was putting in place a priority plan to collect best practices and lessons learned from all the agencies and organizations working in the field so that these could be fed back into programmes at the country level.

313. UNFPA Representatives were already providing some financial support for the HIV/AIDS theme groups at the country level, and the Fund had agreed to issue further guidelines to the country offices in regard to the budgets that could be utilized for such support.

314. The Vice President underlined the importance of the issue and expressed the hope that resource constraints would not hamper results.

315. The Executive Board took note of the oral reports of UNDP, UNFPA and UNAIDS.

E. Population trends

316. One delegation introduced an important new chart on estimated population trends, which showed the ranking of the thirty most populous countries in the world and their relative positions at three different times (1950, 1996 and 2050). The delegation asked that the chart be discussed in more detail during

the third regular session 1997. Other delegations felt that the information contained in the chart was highly relevant but that it required further study and consideration by population experts in the capitals before a substantive discussion could take place in the Executive Board.

F. Conclusion of the session

317. The Executive Board concluded its work by adopting the following decision:

97/20. Overview of decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its annual session 1997

The Executive Board

Recalls that during the annual session 1997 it:

ITEM 1: ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Approved the agenda and work plan for its annual session 1997 (DP/1997/L.3) as amended;

Approved the reports of the first and second regular sessions 1997 (DP/1997/6; DP/1997/12);

Adopted the draft rules of procedure for the Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA (DP/1997/13);

Agreed to the following schedule of future sessions of the Executive Board in 1997 and 1998 subject to approval of the Committee of Conferences:

Third regular session 1997	15-19 September 1997
First regular session 1998	19-23 January 1998
Second regular session 1998	20-24 April 1998
Annual session 1998	8-19 June 1998 (Geneva)
Third regular session 1998	14-18 September 1998

Agreed to the subjects to be discussed at the third regular session 1997 of the Board, as listed in the annex;

UNFPA SEGMENT

ITEM 2: UNFPA: REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR 1996: PROGRAMME PRIORITIES AND REGIONAL OVERVIEW

Took note of the report of the Executive Director for 1996 on programme priorities, statistical overview and regional overview (DP/FPA/1997/10, Parts I, I/Add.1 and Part II);

Adopted decision 97/14 of 16 May 1997 on the five-year review of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development;

Requested the Executive Director to revise the conference room paper on the consequences of resource shortfalls on meeting the goals of the International Conference on Population and Development (DP/FPA/1997/CRP.1) and to submit the revised report as an official document to the Executive Board at its third regular session 1997;

ITEM 3: UNFPA: EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

Took note of the report on UNFPA evaluation activities (DP/FPA/1997/10, Part III);

ITEM 4: UNFPA: WORK PLAN FOR 1998-2001

Adopted decision 97/11 of 14 May 1997 on the UNFPA work plan for 1998-2001 and request for programme expenditure authority;

ITEM 5: UNFPA: PROGRAMMING PROCESS

Adopted decision 97/12 of 16 May 1997 on the UNFPA programming process;

ITEM 6: UNFPA: INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Adopted decision 97/13 of 16 May 1997 on the UNFPA information and communication strategy;

UNDP/UNFPA SEGMENT

ITEM 7: REPORTS TO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Took note of the reports of the Administrator (DP/1997/15) and the Executive Director (DP/FPA/1997/10, Part V) to the Economic and Social Council and agreed to transmit them to the Economic and Social Council with comments made thereon;

ITEMS 2 AND 8: INTERNAL OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Adopted decision 97/16 of 23 May 1997 on internal audit;

UNDP SEGMENT

ITEM 8: UNDP: ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATOR AND RELATED MATTERS

Adopted decision 97/15 of 23 May 1997 on change management: UNDP 2001;

Took note of the report of the Administrator for 1996 on the introduction to the report, main programme record, assistance to the Palestinian people, statistical annex and reports of the Joint Inspection Unit (DP/1997/16/Addenda 1, 3, 5 and 8), with comments made thereon;

Took note of the report of the Administrator on evaluation (DP/1997/16/Add.4), with comments made thereon;

Took note of the report of the Administrator on the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa (DP/1997/16/Add.2), with comments made thereon;

Took note of the report of the Administrator on the outcome of the meeting of the High-Level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation Among Developing Countries and of the decisions adopted at the meeting (DP/1997/L.9).

ITEM 9: UNDP: COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS

Approved the following country cooperation frameworks:

I

First country cooperation framework for Comoros (DP/CCF/COI/1);

First country cooperation framework for Lesotho (DP/CCF/LES/1);

First country cooperation framework for Sierra Leone (DP/CCF/SIL/1), with comments made thereon;

First country cooperation framework for the United Republic of Tanzania (DP/CCF/URT/1);

First country cooperation framework for Zambia (DP/CCF/ZAM/1);

II

First country cooperation framework for Belarus (DP/CCF/BLR/1), with comments made thereon;

First country cooperation framework for Bosnia and Herzegovina (DP/CCF/BIH/1), with comments made thereon;

First country cooperation framework for Estonia (DP/CCF/EST/1);

First country cooperation framework for Lithuania (DP/CCF/LIT/1);

III

First country cooperation framework for Lebanon (DP/CCF/LEB/1), with comments made thereon;

First country cooperation framework for Morocco (DP/CCF/MOR/1);

First country cooperation framework for Tunisia (DP/CCF/TUN/1);

IV

First country cooperation framework for the Islamic Republic of Iran (DP/CCF/IRA/1);

ITEM 10. UNDP: COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION PROGRAMME

Adopted decision 97/17 of 23 May 1997 on the UNDP communication and information policy;

ITEM 11. UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR WOMEN

Adopted decision 97/18 of 23 May 1997 on the United Nations Development Fund for Women;

ITEM 12: FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Took note of the information provided on country office staff allocation (DP/1997/CRP.14) with the comments made thereon;

Took note of the report on the accountability system of UNDP (DP/1997/CRP.13);

ITEM 13: UNITED NATIONS OFFICE FOR PROJECT SERVICES

Took note of the report on the United Nations Office for Project Services (DP/1997/19 and DP/1997/19/Add.1/Rev.1);

ITEM 14: OTHER MATTERS

Adopted decision 97/19 on assistance to the Democratic Republic of the Congo;

Decided to consider the draft terms of reference of the WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health as contained in document DP/FPA/1997/CRP.5 at the third regular session 1997 (15-19 September 1997);

Took note of the reports of UNDP and UNFPA on core allocations to 20/20 (DP/1997/CRP.19 and DP/FPA/1997/CRP.3);

Took note of the oral presentation of UNDP, UNFPA and UNAIDS on UNAIDS programme.

23 May 1997

ANNEX

EXECUTIVE BOARD OF UNDP/UNFPA TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR 1997

Table 1. First regular session 1997 (13-17 January 1997)
(5 working days)

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
1				ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
	Official (DP/1997/L.1)	A	1/2 day	Provisional agenda, annotations, list of documents
	Official	A		Report on the third regular session 1996
	Official	I		Decisions adopted by the Executive Board in 1996
	CRP	I		Matters relating to the rules of procedure, documentation and functioning of the Executive Board
	CRP	A		Annual work plan 1997 for UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board
				UNFPA SEGMENT
2				COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS
	Official	A	1 day	Country programmes
3				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	Official	I	1/2 day	Audit reports
4	Official	A	1/2 day	COORDINATION IN HEALTH POLICY AND PROGRAMMING
				UNDP/UNFPA SEGMENT
5				HARMONIZATION OF PRESENTATION OF BUDGETS
	Official	A	1/2 day	Harmonization of presentation of budgets and accounts
				UNDP SEGMENT
6				COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS
	Official	A	1/2 day	Country cooperation frameworks and global/regional cooperation frameworks

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
7				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	Official	I	{	Audit reports
	CRP	I	{ { {	Implementation of decision 96/40 on management, accountability and reserve for field accommodation
	CRP	I	1/2 day { {	Additional information on cost segments at UNDP headquarters
	Oral	I	{ {	Report on the accountability system of UNDP
8				UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR WOMEN
	CRP	I	1/2 day	Follow-up to decision 96/43
9				OTHER MATTERS
	CRP	I	1/4 day	Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolution 95/56

Abbreviations: A = action; CRP = conference room paper; and I = information.

Table 2. Second regular session 1997 (10-14 March 1997)

(5 working days)

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
1				ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
	Official (DP/1997/L.2)	A		Provisional agenda, annotations, list of documents
	Official	A		Report on the first regular session 1997
				Decisions adopted by the Executive Board at the first regular session 1997
				UNDP SEGMENT
2			1½ days	COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS
	Official	A		Country cooperation frameworks and regional cooperation frameworks
	CRP	A		Format and timing for review of the new programming arrangements (96/7)
	Official	I		Earmarkings for the target for resource assignment from the core (TRAC) for 1997-1999
	CRP	I	½ day	National execution
3				UNITED NATIONS CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT FUND
	Official	A	½ day	United Nations Capital Development Fund (including strategy and business plans)
4				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	CRP	A	½ day	Outline of overall strategy for the budget for the biennium 1998-1999 (96/41, para. 4)
	Oral	I		Report on the accountability system of UNDP
				UNFPA SEGMENT
6	Official	A		COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
7			2 days	OTHER MATTERS including:
	Oral	I		- Report on Reserve for Field Accommodation
	CRP	I		- Revised report on follow-up to ECOSOC resolution 95/56
	CRP	I		- Response to the recommendations of the external evaluation of UNIFEM
	Official	A		- Proposed revision of UNFPA Financial Regulations
	Oral	I		- Report on the UNICEF/WHO/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health

Abbreviations: A = action; CRP = conference room paper; and I = information.

Note: Informal consultations on UNDP Change Management held during the session.

Table 3. Annual session 1997 (12-23 May 1997)
(10 working days)

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
1				ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
	Official (DP/1997/L.3)	A		Provisional agenda, annotations, list of documents/work plan
	Official	A		Report on the first and second regular sessions 1997
	Official	A		Rules of procedure: report of ad hoc open-ended working group
				UNFPA SEGMENT
2	Official			REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR 1996
		I	1½ days	- Programme priorities
		I		- Statistical overview
		I		- Regional overview
3	Official	I	½ day	- Evaluation activities
4	Official	A	½ day	WORK PLAN FOR 1998-2001
5	Official	A	1 day	PROGRAMMING PROCESS
6	Official	A	½ day	INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY
				UNDP/UNFPA SEGMENT
7	Official	I	½ day	Reports of UNDP and UNFPA to the Economic and Social Council
2 & 8	Official	I		Reports of UNDP and UNFPA on internal oversight
				UNDP SEGMENT
8				ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATOR
	Official	A		Introduction by the Administrator
	Official	A		Main programme record, including reporting on special funds (7 parts)
	Official	I		United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for Africa
	Official	I		Assistance to the Palestinian people
	Official	I	2½ days[*]	Evaluation
	Official + CRP	A		Change management
	Official	I		Report of the Joint Inspection Unit
	Official	I		Statistical annex

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[*] Timing includes one day special event on poverty eradication to be held on Tuesday, 20 May 1997.

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
9				COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS
	Official	A	½ day	Country cooperation frameworks and regional cooperation frameworks
10				COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION PROGRAMME
	Official	I	½ day	UNDP information and publication policy (96/22)
11				UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR WOMEN
	Official	A	½ day	United Nations Development Fund for Women (95/18)
12				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	CRP	I	1 day	Report on the accountability system of UNDP
13				UNITED NATIONS OFFICE FOR PROJECT SERVICES
	Official	A		Report on the United Nations Office for Project Services (96/33)
14			½ day	OTHER MATTERS: UNDP and UNFPA and 2020; oral report on UNAID

Abbreviations: A = action; CRP = conference room paper; I = information; and ICPD = International Conference on Population and Development.

Table 4. Third regular session 1997 (15-19 September 1997)

(5 working days)

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
1				ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
	Official (DP/1997/L.4)	A		Provisional agenda, annotations, list of documents
	Official	A	½ day	Report on the annual session 1997
	Official	I		Decisions adopted at the annual session 1997
	CRP	I		Outline for Executive Board work plan 1998
				UNDP SEGMENT
2	CRP	I		UNDP CHANGE MANAGEMENT
				Updated implementation plan (97/15)
3				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	Official	A	1 day	Budget estimates for the biennium 1998-1999 - 96/41, para. 4 - (including detailed costs of publication and of their distribution - 96/22, criteria for staffing of country offices and implementation of change management - 97/15)
	Official	I		Annual review of the financial situation 1996
	Official	I		Subcontracts awarded and major equipment ordered
4	CRP	I	½ day	RESOURCES AND FUNDING STRATEGY
5				UNOPS: FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	Official	A		Budget estimates for the biennium 1998-1999
	Official	A	½ day	Revised budget estimates for the biennium 1996-1997
	Official	I		Audit reports
				United Nations Office for Project Services: report of ACABQ on UNOPS

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
6				COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS
	Official	A	½ day	Country cooperation frameworks and regional cooperation frameworks
		A		Revised global cooperation framework (97/5)
				UNFPA SEGMENT
7				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	Official	A	1½ days	Biennial budget estimates
	Official	A		Annual financial review, 1996
	Official	I		Implementation and monitoring of technical support services arrangements
	Official	I		Evaluation of UNFPA training activities
8	Official	I		RESOURCE MOBILIZATION
9	Official	A		COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS
				Status of financial implementation of country programmes
10			½ day	OTHER MATTERS
				Terms of reference of the WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health

Abbreviations: A = action; CRP = conference room paper; I = information; and UNOPS = United Nations Office for Project Services.

Note: Review of field visits will be taken up in informal consultations during the session.

Part four

THIRD REGULAR SESSION

Held at United Nations Headquarters from
15 to 19 September 1997

I. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

1. The President, Mr. Hans Lundborg (Sweden), opened the session. A minute of silence was held in memory of Mr. Lukabu Khabouji N'Zaji, Chargé d'affaires of the Permanent Mission of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the United Nations. The President noted that the Bureau had met three times: during the meeting of the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session 1997; on 2 September 1997; and on 15 September 1997. At those meetings, the Bureau had reviewed the outcome of the annual session 1997 and field visits made by Board members during the course of the year. The Bureau had also reviewed the agenda for the third regular session and had made a number of proposals regarding the work plan, which had been presented to the informal pre-session meeting on 3 September 1997 and had been adjusted further on the basis of the outcome of that meeting. This included the postponement of the review of the six UNFPA country programmes to the first regular session 1998. An extremely heavy agenda had been planned for the third regular session, and it was possible that all items would not be covered. All speakers were invited to be as brief as possible.

Adoption of the agenda and work plan

2. The Secretary of the Executive Board introduced the provisional agenda and work plan, as contained in DP/1997/L.4/Rev.1. She noted that the documents for the session had been mailed to the permanent missions of each Board member. In addition, a full set of documents had been provided to each Board member on the first day of the session; however, as documentation available at each session was limited, this practice would be discontinued in the future. Instructions on how to obtain documentation through the Internet were available at the session.

3. The work plan for the session had been revised to reflect the discussions held at the pre-session informal meeting. Some of the items not covered during the session and which did not require a decision by the Executive Board could be taken up at an informal meeting on 9 October 1997. Consideration of UNFPA country programmes had been postponed to the first regular session 1998, a measure that would not have an impact on programming. In accordance with Executive Board decision 96/7, requests for separate discussions were received by the Secretariat for the first country cooperation frameworks for the following countries: Angola (DP/CCF/ANG/1); Burkina Faso (DP/CCF/BKF/1); Cambodia (DP/CCF/CMB/1); Nigeria (DP/CCF/NIR/1); Pakistan (DP/CCF/PAK/1); Peru (DP/CCF/PER/1); South Africa (DP/CCF/SAF/1); Yugoslavia (DP/CCF/YUG/1); and Zimbabwe (DP/CCF/ZIM/1). Informal meetings on financial and budgetary matters, the UNDP micro-credit programme and with visiting UNDP resident representatives were scheduled to take place during the session. At the request of the Administrative Committee on Coordination, the statement on universal access to basic communication and information services adopted by the Committee in April 1997 had been distributed to the Executive Board.

4. The delegation of China, speaking as one of the six countries with proposed UNFPA country programmes on the agenda for the session, stated that it was surprised that at the pre-session informal meeting it had been decided to recommend postponing consideration of the UNFPA country programmes. In its view, the fact there were many items on the agenda was not sufficient reason for

such a postponement. However, the delegation was willing to agree to the revised tentative work plan if the UNFPA Secretariat would state explicitly that delaying the Executive Board's consideration of the UNFPA country programmes would not affect their future implementation, especially not the proposed timing of the programmes.

5. The UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) thanked the delegation of China for its comment and informed the Board that five of the six proposed country programmes were scheduled to begin in 1998 and one was scheduled to begin in 1997. The Fund would, within the limits of its resources, try to safeguard the implementation of all six programmes and would seek to ensure that there were no negative implications for any of them.

6. The President thanked the delegation for its cooperation and stated that the Bureau had made its recommendation only upon receiving such an assurance from the UNFPA secretariat.

7. One delegation stated that consideration of the 86 country cooperation frameworks before the Executive Board under the UNDP segment of the session should have been divided more evenly among the sessions of the Board. Another delegation stated that many country cooperation frameworks and some other documentation had been issued late in languages other than the language of the original texts. In that regard, the revised global cooperation framework (DP/GCF/1/Rev.1) could be postponed to the first regular session 1998, owing to its late issuance.

8. The Secretary of the Executive Board stated that the UNDP budget had been produced in a new format, a factor which had led to its being issued a few days late. Most country cooperation frameworks had been issued on time, but it was up to the Board to decide whether to consider those that had been distributed after the deadline. The large volume of documentation processed by the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services throughout the summer merited consideration.

9. The Executive Board approved the proposed agenda for the session contained in document DP/1997/L.4/Rev.1, as amended.

Item 1. Organizational matters

UNDP segment

Item 2. UNDP change management

Item 3. Financial, budgetary and administrative matters

Item 4. Resources and funding strategy

Item 5. UNOPS: Financial, budgetary and administrative matters

Item 6. Country cooperation frameworks and related matters

UNFPA segment

Item 7. Financial, budgetary and administrative matters

Item 8. Resource mobilization

Item 9. Country programmes and related matters (postponed to first regular session 1998)

Item 10. Other matters

10. The Executive Board approved the revised work plan as distributed at the session, with the understanding that if there were not enough time during the session, the items scheduled for Friday, 19 September 1997, would be taken up at an informal meeting on 9 October 1997.

11. The Executive Board approved the report on the annual session 1997, as contained in document DP/1997/21.

Draft work plan 1998

12. The Secretary introduced the draft work plan for 1998, as contained in document DP/1997/CRP.21. She drew the attention of the Executive Board to the attempt to focus the first regular session on UNDP matters, and the second regular session on UNFPA matters. The funding strategy paper (DP/1997/CRP.23) distributed at the current session would be discussed at an informal meeting of the Board to be held later in 1997, which would also include a presentation on the Latin America cost-sharing model. The item on the United Nations Volunteers would be taken up by the Board at its annual session 1998.

13. One speaker requested that the paper on non-core resources to be considered at the first regular session 1998 be for 'action' rather than 'information'. Another delegation suggested that the item on evaluation could be taken up at the second regular session 1998, so as to lighten the agenda for the annual session. One delegation requested a list of mid-term reviews scheduled for 1998 and 1999. Another delegation suggested that there be a joint UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF report to the Economic and Social Council, instead of three individual reports. Another speaker underlined the need for continued presentations of strategic evaluations by UNDP or UNFPA throughout the year.

14. Several delegations expressed support for greater flexibility in the scheduling of Executive Board sessions, including the convening of a joint UNDP, UNFPA and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Executive Board meeting to allow for an exchange of views on the impact of United Nations reform on the Funds and Programmes.

15. The Secretary noted that the draft work plan for 1998 (DP/1997/CRP.21) would be revised to take into account the decisions and comments made at the current session.

16. The Executive Board took note of the proposed work plan for 1998 (DP/1997/CRP.21), with the comments made thereon.

17. The Executive Board approved the agenda for the first regular session of 1998, as amended, including a joint segment with the UNICEF Executive Board.

Statement of the Administrator

18. In his welcoming statement, the Administrator informed the Executive Board that the main UNDP-related items to be discussed would be the 1996 financial situation; the 1998-1999 biennial budget; the resources and funding strategy; UNDP 2001 change management; and country cooperation frameworks, the regional cooperation framework for the Arab States and the global cooperation framework. An oral update on the Reserve for Field Accommodation would be given later in the week. He then gave an overview of key developments since the annual session of the Board, including the expectations regarding the United Nations Development Group put forward by the Secretary-General in his Track II reform proposals.

19. In launching the discussions, the Administrator informed the Executive Board about how programme delivery had been improved, how UNDP proposed to implement Executive Board decision 97/15 and the United Nations reform package announced by the Secretary-General with a no-growth budget in real terms for 1998-1999, and how UNDP was seeking ways to ensure a more sustainable funding strategy. He underlined the vibrancy of the work of UNDP at the country level, and the ways in which UNDP was helping to make a difference in developing countries. However, he noted, just at the time when UNDP had been a leader in unprecedented reform in the United Nations and in UNDP, when country offices were implementing more focused programmes with greater impact, and when UNDP could make more of a difference in the lives of the poor, the organization was faced with a debilitating decline in core contributions. This was in spite of the commitments made by donors both to increase official development assistance and to support the role of the United Nations in development. He was committed to leading an organization that could and did make a real difference in the lives of the poor - an organization that was being placed increasingly in jeopardy. He hoped that the Board and the donor community would support the efforts of UNDP, building on previous commitments, and assuming a new level of responsibility for the health and success of what was a uniquely valuable organization.

20. Several delegations called the Administrator's statement an important contribution to the discussion of the Executive Board. Some delegations underlined the uncertainty associated with the voluntary funding arrangements of UNDP. More commitment from decision-makers was required, including through different mechanisms that would provide long-term financing. The current situation must be reversed, many speakers noted, in particular in light of institutional changes already undertaken by UNDP. One speaker underscored the fact that UNDP had undertaken a large amount of staff cuts over the past few years and could not cut further. His delegation was likely to raise its contribution in 1998. While more predictable funding was desirable, some speakers emphasized the need for a frank exchange of views on its problems as defined by donors, as well as enhanced programme focus. More information on success stories, greater attention to monitoring and evaluation, and definition of the comparative advantage of UNDP was required. Impact and visibility were

key items. Some speakers looked forward to a useful discussion at the 'Focus within the Focus' workshop, scheduled for 22 September 1997.

21. The Administrator informed the Executive Board that the decline in contributions had necessitated spreading programming originally intended for a three-year period, 1997-1999, to a four-year period, to include the year 2000. Partnerships at the country level could assist UNDP in ensuring more financing through additional non-core contributions. UNDP had done well in terms of funding when compared with some other multilateral institutions although was at a disadvantage with regard to those organizations which had assessed contributions, funding through treaty obligations, or long-term pledging systems. The total amount of resources managed by UNDP was at an all-time high of $2.4 billion. Core resources accounted for only about one third of that amount. There had been many success stories in UNDP and much progress in making the organization more efficient and effective. However, the G-7 countries had experienced huge budget cuts, which had affected the funding of UNDP. Thus, the low level of core funding was not linked to a negative performance of UNDP. On the contrary, UNDP had responded rapidly and well to current development needs through its country office network. The question that needed to be addressed was how the United Nations could be sustained as a major development organization in the world today - if it could not, it would not be sustainable for other purposes.

22. The dialogue on the subject was welcome and should be encouraged, one speaker said. The situation was quite serious, considering that further reductions could be forthcoming. The Executive Board had completed a thorough review of UNDP, which included Executive Board decision 97/15 on change management. The implementation of change must be safeguarded, including through greater accountability on the part of the Board. Reform of the funding structure of UNDP must be realized.

23. The President noted that some donor countries also took into consideration their assessed contributions to the European Commission.

24. The Administrator reiterated that UNDP was improving its performance and responding to its mandates. Systemic change was taking place, which could enable the United Nations to regain a strong development component. The role of donors and Executive Board members in United Nations reform was critical. Governments that had indicated that they were likely to reduce their funding to UNDP were requested to reconsider.

II. UNDP CHANGE MANAGEMENT

25. The Administrator delivered a statement to the Executive Board on progress made in the implementation of the change management process in UNDP, in accordance with decision 97/15. A conference room paper (DP/1997/CRP.22) provided an update to the implementation plan presented to the Board at its annual session 1997 in document DP/1997/CRP.16. Nearly 70 UNDP resident representatives had been briefed in regional meetings on the outcome of the Board's decision. The roles of UNDP resident representatives and United Nations resident coordinators had been clearly defined. In terms of their support to

the United Nations system and to their own programmes as well, members of the United Nations Development Group had two roles to play. The Administrator explained that UNDP had the additional responsibility of managing the resident coordinator system. Resident representatives had been briefed on the enhanced accountability measures and the new oversight role of headquarters units. Clear indicators would be introduced in 1998 to measure programme impact, management performance, staff empowerment and stakeholder relations. Regional meetings on change management had examined the means whereby country offices could be transformed into development centres to meet the needs of programme countries.

26. The updated implementation plan contained in document DP/1997/CRP.22 included the identification and appointment of new managers and a new structure for the organization. Other measures taken were the elimination of distinction in name between the General Service and Professional categories, the development of a Better Meetings Programme, work on the launch strategy for the subregional resource facilities and arrangements for resident representatives to participate in Executive Committee meetings twice a year.

27. The Administrator noted that Mr. Walter Franco, the manager of the change process, had taken up a new assignment as UNDP Resident Representative in Brazil. Mr. Jan Mattson had taken up his responsibilities as Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Planning and Resource Management, which was responsible for producing the organization plan, ensuring that appropriate human and material resources were utilized, and coordinating, monitoring and following-up on change initiatives.

28. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Planning and Resource Management introduced himself to the Executive Board, noting that he had served on the Change Management Committee and on the Transition Team established by the Administrator in 1993. He underlined the enthusiasm of his country office colleagues for the change process. Regional meetings for resident representatives in Asia and the Pacific, Africa, and Latin America and the Caribbean had been important opportunities for exchange of views. He praised the work of those who had participated in the design phase of the process for producing a better organization. A key element was ensuring that change implemented at headquarters resulted in improved service to and empowerment of country offices. A change resource guide that would document country office best practices in efficiency, effectiveness and better service was also being designed. Country offices would monitor change from the grass-roots level and expect results from headquarters. At the same time, the support and guidance of the Executive Board was counted upon. The ultimate goal was to serve programme countries and to eliminate poverty.

29. One delegation praised the quality and format of the conference room paper. The speaker requested that UNDP utilize quantitative as well as qualitative indicators in measuring the implementation of change. Another speaker underlined the need to have documentation well in advance of the meeting. Several delegations suggested holding informal meetings of the Executive Board on change management in the autumn, including with resident representatives who were visiting New York.

30. The Administrator stated that change would be incorporated in the individual compacts established with the bureaux and through regional bureau heads with resident representatives. He agreed that quantitative indicators were important. He noted that a memorandum containing information on the new structure of UNDP would be issued. While most change elements were captured within the 1998-1999 budget, extrabudgetary funding would be sought to fund certain elements of the change process.

31. The President informed the Executive Board that informal briefings would be held in the coming months on the subject.

32. The Executive Board took note of the information contained in conference room paper on change management (DP/1997/CRP.22).

III. UNDP: FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Budget estimates for the biennium 1998-1999

33. For its consideration of this item, the Executive Board had before it the following documents: budget estimates for the 1998-1999 biennium (DP/1997/23); and the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (DP/1997/31).

34. The Administrator introduced the item by stating that this was the first time the budget was being presented in the newly harmonized format, as approved by the Executive Board in item 5 of its decision 97/6. He mentioned that considerable work had gone into the new presentation, which had been developed jointly with UNFPA and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and he hoped that the Board would agree that it was an improvement. He further elaborated that the combination of presenting the budget in the new format and the incorporation of the elements of the change process naturally complicated the manner in which the development of the budget proposals could be compared to the originally approved 1996-1997 budget. In that connection, he hoped that the special annex in the document had made such comparison easier. He also noted that the budget proposals responded to the actions taken by the Secretary-General in his Track I and II reform initiatives.

35. With regard to the budget proposals for the biennium 1998-1999, the Administrator stated that in accordance with the strategy outline presented to the Executive Board at its regular session in 1997, the proposals did not incorporate growth in real terms. Taking into account projected income, the 1998-1999 budget in real terms would be within less than 2 per cent of the net budget approved for 1996-1997 - very close to a no-growth budget in nominal terms. However, the new budget had not been designed to preserve the status quo, but contained many elements that were crucial for the implementation of the change process, including an important organizational restructuring and also a further shift of resources to the country level. The new budget supported the new UNDP and was essential to give the new UNDP an opportunity to succeed in the new biennium.

36. The Administrator then highlighted the main principles that guided the implementation of change as reflected in the budget proposals, namely: (a) the decentralization of operational and substantive capacities to the subregional and country levels; (b) management controls, with review and reporting on an ex-post facto basis; (c) management systems, including those for finance, human resources and information, which were designed to empower country offices with ex ante authority and timely management information; and (d) a headquarters that had been redesigned to carry out strategic functions.

37. The Administrator said that he was aware that the proposals resulted in an increase in the relative share of total resources that would be allocated for the biennial support budget. This, in turn, had resulted from voluntary contributions not having reached the planning targets set by the Executive Board in its decision 95/23. In that connection, a new round of budget reductions dictated by short-term resource considerations would have negative and irreversible consequences for UNDP in the long term. As the Board was aware, UNDP had already gone through six years of stressful and time-consuming downsizing, which had had negative effects on staff morale and on the capacity of the organization as a whole.

38. The Administrator then set before the Executive Board his arguments as to why additional downsizing was not warranted. First, most of the proposed UNDP budget had been allocated for staff and most of those staff members worked in country offices. It was vital to recognize that the recent dramatic changes in the nature of UNDP programmes from simply providing funds to providing knowledge-based services required that the organization become more staff-intensive. Now more than ever, UNDP staff were the most important resource that UNDP could offer at the country level, and such a capacity could not be easily rebuilt.

39. Second, the Administrator stated that the last six years of downsizing had cut the fat out of the UNDP budget, and had in fact cut into the muscle and bone of the organization, leaving it weakened in numerous areas. While there were economies of scale in programme delivery, UNDP had reached the point where decreases in programme resources did not imply that administrative costs could also be reduced without changing the fundamental nature of the organization. Delivery of quality programmes and other core responsibilities, he said, would be adversely affected, and organization's success in programmes would be greatly damaged.

40. Third, the Administrator stressed the importance of the UNDP 2001 change process to programme countries and to UNDP itself. The change process was an intensive one, which required maximum attention over and above the normal activities of UNDP. In that context, UNDP management and other staff would not be able to absorb another two years of downsizing while sustaining normal activities and devoting highly motivated attention to implementing fundamental changes. The organization needed a period of consolidation to incorporate the major changes and reforms adopted in recent years.

41. Fourth, further reductions would seriously affect the organization's ability to maintain its country office network. Such reductions would also have important implications for the support that the UNDP country office network must

provide to the operational activities of the United Nations system as a whole, including to the resident coordinator system. The Administrator referred to the new study in the document that indicated that the workload in country offices associated with support to the United Nations system had increased from 29 per cent to 34 per cent.

42. The Administrator stated that the legislative responsibilities of UNDP with regard to the resident coordinator system required financial commitments. The General Assembly had repeatedly confirmed that the UNDP Resident Representative would normally be the United Nations Resident Coordinator and that the Resident Coordinator, in turn, would normally be the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator. He further stated that the Track I and II reforms announced by the Secretary-General required UNDP to continue to fund and manage the resident coordinator system and that the responsibilities of the resident coordinator, as the leader of the United Nations country team, should be increased. UNDP, the Administrator said, was increasingly needed as a coordinating, unifying and synthesizing force, without which all development activities of the United Nations would suffer. The organization's responsibilities required maximum coverage of countries by the resident representative/resident coordinator system, which remained a crucial aspect of the universality of the United Nations.

43. It was difficult, the Administrator said, to predict with certainty future patterns of official development assistance (ODA), and thus, the organization's own regular resources. Accordingly, discussions on the development of a sustainable funding strategy were important. Were ODA to begin to increase rather than to decrease further, cutting valuable capacities to accommodate the short-term scenario would be imprudent. The Administrator stated that he recognized that if ODA continued to decline, resulting in a further decline in UNDP regular resources, another round of downsizing would be inevitable. However, he cautioned, any such downsizing would have an impact on the fundamental nature of the organization, not only as it related to UNDP programme activities, but also in the context of the operational activities of the United Nations. While there would continue to be opportunities for achieving general efficiency gains, there would, however, be a limit to which such gains could continue to be identified and implemented.

44. Regarding other (non-core) resources, the Administrator stated that continued growth was foreseen, and that their relationship with regular (core) resources would continue to be reviewed carefully. The subject would be addressed at the first regular session in 1998.

45. The Administrator then briefly outlined the proposals related to income in the budget proposed for the biennium 1998-1999 and their effect on net appropriations. UNDP would continue to aim at achieving a substantial increase in income by collecting government contributions towards local office costs (GLOC). In that connection, he proposed the introduction of a new element regarding the coverage of shortfalls. Other elements proposed were a more appropriate presentation of the refund to staff members for income taxes levied by Member States on income derived from UNDP, and an income line to offset the gross budget of United Nations Volunteers (UNV).

46. Referring to some of the points raised by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) in its report (DP/1997/31), the Administrator relayed his appreciation of the constructive, open and frank discussions UNDP had had with the Committee. On the overall resource situation, he referred to his earlier comments on the subject. On UNDP support for the operational activities of the United Nations, he said that he was confident that the results of studies UNDP had undertaken were realistic.

47. On the point raised by ACABQ about the number of high-level posts at headquarters following considerable restructuring, decentralization and delegation of authority to the field, the Administrator stressed that post levels should appropriately reflect the levels of responsibility and accountability assigned to them. He said that such post levels had been confirmed in the context of the change process. He further elaborated that a headquarters redesigned to carry out important strategic functions and oversight could be expected to employ staff at higher levels. Moreover, as a result of the previous downsizing at headquarters, which had been considerable, responsibilities and accountability rested on fewer staff members.

48. On the Committee's recommendation that levels of the heads of the regional bureaux should be the same, the Administrator referred to his comments on the subject to the Executive Board at its annual session 1997, and looked forward to further discussion during the session.

Summary of discussions

49. Many delegations expressed appreciation for the Administrator's statement. In welcoming the new harmonized budget presentation, several delegations commended the Administration for a good, clear and transparent budget document. They also stated their appreciation for the incorporation of the change process in the budget. Several delegations said that the implementation of the change process was crucial to the organization's viability. They were also appreciative of the shift of resources from headquarters to country offices.

50. Many delegations agreed with the Administrator that UNDP should not make budget cuts since the organization had already cut its budget a number of times. They expressed concern about the ongoing capacity of UNDP if further reductions were to be effected. Some delegations appreciated the Administrator's proposal for close-to-zero real growth in the net budget. Some delegations expressed their concern about the 7 per cent growth rate in the gross budget. One delegation was concerned about the hypothetical nature of the projected increase foreseen in revenue. The same delegation particularly regretted that, given the decrease in contributions received by the organization, the administrator had not considered a zero-growth budget for administrative costs in order to ensure that the maximum amount of resources were reserved for programmes.

51. Some delegations referred to the important role UNDP played and were concerned that further reductions could have a negative impact on the organization. Others said that any further reductions should be reviewed in the context of the ongoing United Nations reform process.

52. Several delegations, however, expressed their concern that administrative costs were increasing, and stressed that such costs should be kept down. Some delegations proposed that UNDP should consider closing some country offices.

53. A number of delegations said that, as noted by ACABQ, the allocation of 29 per cent of total resources for the biennial budget was not in line with Executive Board decision 95/23, in which the Board had indicated that the proportion was to be 24.1 per cent. One delegation mentioned that decision 95/23 was based on a positive outlook on income, a perspective that had now changed and therefore needed to be addressed by the Board.

54. Some delegations said that UNDP had been doing its best to reduce its costs and had succeeded. UNDP could not continue to cut its budget without ultimately decreasing its capacity. In that regard, delegations asked what the role of the Executive Board should be in helping UNDP to improve its resource situation.

55. One delegation requested information on the cost of implementing UNDP 2001. Another delegation asked about the impact of the savings on UNDP salary costs, following the separations of staff members over the recent bienniums.

56. One delegation noted a lack of justification for having 45 offices in countries where the core resources allocated for programmes were less than $3 million. The same delegation stated that such offices could be covered through a regional presence and suggested that UNDP review its country office network.

57. One delegation was concerned that the costs of supporting non-core resource programmes were being subsidized by regular resources, especially in the Latin America region. The same delegation agreed with ACABQ that non-core resource programmes must bear their own costs.

58. Some delegations were concerned about whether the UNDP non-core resource programmes were within the sustainable human development framework and questioned whether UNDP should get involved in such free-standing activities. They looked forward to the discussions on the subject at the first regular session 1998. One delegation said that it was essential to mobilize resources through joint cost-sharing.

59. Some delegations expressed appreciation for the increase of resources for country offices, including the establishment of the subregional resource facilities (SURFs). The same delegations appreciated the equal treatment in the staffing of country offices. Some delegations were concerned about the reduction in the number of staff in the Africa and Arab States regions while the number of staff was being increased in the Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States region. One delegation said it would follow the issue of staff reductions in the Africa region closely. Another delegation recalled the decision of the United Nations to give priority to development in Africa, which it strongly supported.

60. Some delegations stated their appreciation for UNDP work in the Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States region and supported the strengthening of staff capacity in that region by comparing existing staffing levels in country

offices in the region with similar staffing levels in programmes in other regions.

61. Some delegations cited one of the recommendations of ACABQ, namely that the heads of all the regional bureaux should be at the same level, in line with Governing Council decision 71/14 (see E/4954, para. 52 (b)). In that context, they requested a decision from the Administrator on the level of the head of the Regional Bureau for Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States.

62. Some delegations supported the Administrator's proposals on support to the operational activities of the United Nations. Some delegations felt that other United Nations agencies benefiting from the support should also share in funding that support, including costs related to the resident coordinator system. One delegation expressed concern about the increasing costs of support to the operational activities of the United Nations.

63. One delegation noted that the key feature of the budget was prudence and reality and said that the budget was a modest one. Another delegation noted the Administrator's wish to be optimistic about increases in the level of ODA. In that regard, many delegations stressed that the discussions on a funding strategy were important.

64. A few delegations indicated a need for caution in approving the budget, and said that the general resource situation of UNDP should be reassessed in 1998.

65. Some delegations were concerned about the infrastructure expansion necessitated by the establishment of SURFs, in a period of resource constraints. Some delegations also felt that the role of SURFs needed to be better defined.

66. Some delegations referred to the ACABQ comments on the number of high-level posts. They thought that with extensive decentralization, those posts should be reviewed for possible reclassification. One delegation said that the Executive Board should also review the allocation and number of posts at the Assistant Secretary-General level.

67. One delegation suggested that UNDP should consider using contract staff in view of its flexibility to adapt based on the resource situation.

68. Many delegations stressed that it was important that the Executive Board not separate policy from the budget in future. They said that all policy decisions should be made with full knowledge of the cost implications. For example, only by discussing the budget estimates for the biennium had the costs of the SURFs become available. One delegation stressed the need for a close link between the programme support budget and the programme itself.

69. Some delegations mentioned that they would be maintaining their level of voluntary contributions while two delegations referred to reductions in their contributions. Another two delegations referred to possible increases in their voluntary contributions.

70. Some delegations considered that it was the responsibility of the Executive Board to ensure the financial stability of UNDP and to address the implications of reduced voluntary contributions.

71. On the projected resources for the biennium 1998-1999, some delegations thought that a prudent estimate would be $800 million per year.

72. Some delegations were concerned about the potential downward adjustment in country programmes because of shortfalls in payments related to GLOC. The same delegations expressed concern about the impact of the new mechanism on low-income and least developed countries (LDCs). One delegation said that the criteria that allowed for certain costs of net contributor countries to be borne by UNDP needed to be reviewed.

73. One delegation questioned the amount allocated to the Operations Support Group. The same delegation also stated that the role of the Group was still not clear.

74. Making reference to the Secretary-General's reforms, one delegation said that it viewed UNDP as a leading international development institution, particularly in terms of the resident coordinator system, which successfully utilized its own resources as well as mobilized additional resources. One delegation requested clarification of the role of the United Nations Development Group. Another delegation also stressed that UNDP should ensure maximum cooperation among United Nations organizations, in line with the Secretary-General's reform proposals, such as in the areas of common premises and systems development.

75. One delegation asked whether there would be savings through increased cooperation at the country level through common services.

76. One delegation commented that UNDP programmes in the Latin America region were dynamic. Reduced regular resources for UNDP would also have an impact on the effectiveness of the organization in mobilizing resources crucial to developing economies, including non-core resources.

77. One delegation stated that UNDP played a crucial role in development and was concerned that any further reductions would have a negative impact on the organization. Another delegation noted his country's appreciation of the assistance received from UNDP as his country moved from crisis to development.

78. On the subject of the Secretary-General's Track I reforms, one delegation asked how the incorporation of those reforms could be identified in the budget. The same delegation also commented on the increase in the number of staff in the Bureau of Resource Mobilization and External Affairs (BREA) and the Bureau for Planning and Resource Management (BPRM). On the subject of BPRM, the delegation asked whether its large size would assist or hinder its ability to carry out its crucial functions. The same delegation also mentioned that the goals and objectives for budget allocations could not be identified and outputs could therefore not be assessed.

79. Some delegations questioned the increase in the overall number of posts. One delegation requested information on core staff since 1991 and the current age distribution of UNDP staff. On the new staffing formula for UNV, one delegation asked why the Administrator was proposing a new formula for UNV when the existing one was working well. The same delegation also inquired as to why the programme cycle had been extended from a period of three years to four years.

80. One delegation expressed concern that the income forecast for the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) seemed unrealistic, and as such, the budget was also too high and therefore needed to be brought in line with a more realistic income projection.

81. While agreeing that the country office network assisted the United Nations system, one delegation thought that it was too costly for UNDP. The delegation suggested that UNDP look at alternatives for reducing costs, such as the posting of national liaison officers, as was currently done in a few offices in the Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States region.

82. One delegation asked for clarification on the comment by ACABQ that Development Support Services (DSS) and SURFs were overlapping resources. Another delegation asked why DSS needed to have a separate biennial budget line and suggested that it should fall under programme resources.

83. One delegation inquired whether there was any separate financing from other members of the United Nations family in support of the Office of United Nations Support and Services (OUNS). Another delegation requested information as to what items were included under the budget lines "central".

Response of the Administration

84. The Administrator thanked the delegations for their words of appreciation for the budget document and the new harmonized presentation. He also expressed his gratitude to delegations that mentioned that they were increasing or maintaining their level of voluntary contributions.

85. With regard to whether the UNDP presence was overextended in many countries, the Administrator said that programme countries had manifested a strong desire for the UNDP presence as a crucial partner in development, in addition to direct access to a resident representative/resident coordinator.

86. On the subject of non-core resources, the Administrator considered such resources as integral to the overall mission of UNDP, and said that he did not see any inconsistencies in the organization's overall non-core resource programmes.

87. Regarding the level of the heads of all regional bureaux, the Administrator stated that they were all at the level of Assistant Administrator. On the subject of increasing the number of Assistant Secretary-General posts, he said that that was a matter for the Executive Board. However, he reiterated his position that it did not seem to be the appropriate time to create additional Assistant Secretary-General posts.

88. On the linkage between programmes and the budget, the Administrator said that programmes had been fully taken into account, including target for resource assignment from the core TRAC allocations, in the formulation of the budget.

89. With regard to the reforms proposed by the Secretary-General, UNDP had incorporated the support and management of the resident coordinator system within the UNDP 2001 change process as well as in the 1998-1999 budget. The Administrator further elaborated on the historical link between the resident representative and the resident coordinator, who in most cases were the same individual. At the country level, UNDP had been the hub of the United Nations system, with strong programmatic and historical linkages.

90. On the role of the United Nations Development Group, the Administrator mentioned that its purpose was to improve and strengthen management at the country level. The Group would be responsible for the selection criteria for the resident coordinators. It would also follow up on the various General Assembly decisions directly relating to the mandate of the Group as a whole.

91. On the subject of SURFs, the Administrator observed that their role and functions had been discussed with the Executive Board in the context of UNDP 2001. He stated that two SURFs in Asia had already shown positive results and that SURFs were a good way to provide substantive support at the subregional level. The Administrator also noted that SURFs would be able to support some of the concepts outlined by the Secretary-General in his reform proposals.

92. With regard to common services, the Administrator said that UNDP was moving ahead in that area. In some countries, UNDP shared office space under common premises. However, the cost implications of moving into common premises remained an ongoing issue that needed to be addressed by the United Nations family at the country level.

93. On the increase in the budget for support to operational activities of the United Nations relating to country offices, the Administrator stated that the increase was due to inflation and currency adjustments. With respect to other United Nations agencies sharing in those costs, support to operational activities was a UNDP responsibility and therefore was financed by UNDP; thus, the management of the function was straightforward.

94. The continent of Africa, the Administrator said, remained extremely important and received priority attention. However, the United Nations also worked in other regions where there were developing countries that required UNDP support.

95. On the subject of the less than 2 per cent net increase in the budget, the Administrator said that UNDP did not think that the increase was high. However, if the Executive Board so desired, he was willing to reduce the increase to arrive at zero net growth.

96. With regard to the financing of OUNS by other members of the United Nations family, the Administrator said that UNFPA, UNICEF and the World Food Programme were contributing staff.

97. Regarding which staff members paid taxes and to which countries, the Director of the Budget Section said that the information was available in the records of the organization.

98. On the subject of country office staffing financed from regular resources, the Director of the Budget Section stated that the allocation of such staff was based on the country TRAC allocations in each region.

99. With regard to GLOC, the Director of the Budget Section said that the current mechanism took into account the ability of countries to pay - countries with the lowest per capita income received a 75 per cent waiver. Currently, UNDP collected approximately $40 million per biennium. The total projection for GLOC for the biennium 1998-1999 might not be fully met but the organization would do its best through existing and newly introduced mechanisms to encourage programme countries to meet their obligations. He noted the endorsement of the principles of GLOC by some delegations from programme countries.

100. On the subject of support to non-core programmes, the Director of the Budget Section said that a legal basis existed for fees to be charged for such support. The UNDP Financial Regulations and Rules asked for reasonable costs to be covered. He also noted that the Executive Board had been approving country cooperation frameworks with substantial cost-sharing programmes. Furthermore, the subject of non-core resources would be addressed by the Board at its first regular session 1998.

101. The Director of the Budget Section noted that 40 per cent of the costs relating to the headquarters and country office operations for the Regional Bureau of Latin America and the Caribbean was covered by the regular budget while the remaining 60 per cent was covered by fees from non-core programmes.

102. With regard to the increase in staff costs by 8.3 per cent, the Director of the Budget Section said that the increase was due to mandated salary increases, such as increases in salary scales, among other things.

103. On the subject of the renegotiation of current headquarters leases, the Director of the Budget Section said that such renegotiation had already been completed, resulting in a savings of $6 million for the biennium.

104. Regarding the overall increase in the number of staff, the Director of the Budget Section said that the increase was minimal and limited to local staff in country offices. On the use of contract staff, he said that UNDP had already increased the number of such staff for certain functions, under new contractual modalities. The staffing of SURFs would be achieved through redeployment of posts from headquarters and therefore there would be no increased cost to the organization. He reiterated that there would be a pilot phase in the introduction of the SURFs and that the concept would be expanded only after positive evaluations of the pilot phase.

105. On the cost of implementing UNDP 2001, the Director of the Budget Section said that it amounted to $25 million. He also mentioned that UNDP was saving an estimated $46 million in salary costs in the 1998-1999 budget, owing to the downsizing of the previous three bienniums. Regarding savings through common

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premises, he said that UNDP had already benefited from such savings. However, there were no specific proposals in the budget with respect to common services in the context of United Nations reform proposals as more time was needed to assess and quantify the implications of UNDP participation.

106. With regard to DSS, the Director of the Budget Section said that DSS was basically a consultancy resource for country offices, and was shown under a separate budget line because the Executive Board had wanted to emphasize its special use, namely, the provision of substantive support through mainly local consultancies. He said that DSS and SURFs were not overlapping mechanisms but would rather strengthen substantive capacity at the regional and country levels through a combination of resources.

107. On the income projection for UNIFEM, the Director of the Budget Section said that the forecast was in line with the UNIFEM business plan submitted to the Executive Board at its annual session 1997, which had received strong support. Increases in the budget were mainly due to post reclassifications, which were also in line with the business plan and the presentation of the budget in the harmonized format.

108. Regarding the increase in the budget for BREA, the Director of the Budget Section said that the increase had taken into account, among other things, the Executive Board's request to strengthen BREA. As for the size of BPRM, he said that the combination of the resource planning and resource management functions would help the Administrator to strengthen the organization's capacities in those crucial areas, and that the size of the bureau would not have an adverse impact on its ability to deliver services.

109. On the subject of output budgeting, the Director of the Budget Section said that it was a complex matter, and that UNDP - as well as other agencies in the United Nations system - looking into it.

110. The adjustments in the Africa region were in line with UNDP 2001. There were no substantial decreases in the number of staff in the region; for the most part, there were redeployments in connection with SURFs and the Operations Support Group, both of which provided support for the region in its work. Furthermore, the decrease in staff costs was mainly due to bringing into line total staff costs after the various reductions in the previous bienniums.

111. Regarding the duration of the programme cycle being expanded from three years to four years, the Director of the Budget Section said that it was required as a result of the current level of voluntary contributions.

112. On the new staffing formula for UNV, the Director of the Budget Section said that the Executive Board had requested that UNDP review the existing formula, and that the new formula took into account economies of scale, which the Board as well as ACABQ had always desired.

113. The Director of the Budget Section then stated that specific requests by delegations for additional information would be dealt with on a bilateral basis.

Government contributions towards local office costs

114. The delegation of Brazil took the floor before the adoption of decision 97/24 on the budget estimates for the biennium 1998-1999 (see below) to reiterate its full support to the principle that all countries must fulfil their commitments to international organizations. He noted that, since paragraph 3 of part I of the draft decision corresponded to the will of the majority of the Executive Board, his delegation would not oppose it. However, his delegation wished to comment that by authorizing the Administrator to establish a 'programme linkage' mechanism, as discussed in paragraphs 57-61 of document DP/1997/23, the Board was creating a new mechanism to cover shortfalls in GLOC, without investigating the causes of such shortfalls. His delegation was also concerned that the mechanism of 'programme linkage' could have a negative impact on international cooperation, as the mechanism reallocated financial resources originally destined for development operations to cover administrative expenditures. Considering that local costs of UNDP country offices could increase up to 80 per cent from one year to the next, lack of appropriate consultation with programme countries or the Board could lead to the risk that, in the short-term, core resources allocated to some countries could be substantially reduced or redirected to cover only operational expenditures. That possibility introduced an element of uncertainty for programme planning. The Administrator was requested to present in 1998 a report on mechanisms to increase the administrative and financial transparency and accountability of country offices, in consultation with programme countries.

115. The President informed the Executive Board that the request made by the delegation of Brazil would be discussed by the Bureau, within the regional groups, and then placed in the programme of work for 1998.

116. The Executive Board adopted the following decision:

97/24. Budget estimates for the biennium 1998-1999

I. UNDP

The Executive Board

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Administrator on the biennial support budget estimates for the biennium 1998-1999 as contained in document DP/1997/23, which incorporate elements necessary for the implementation of the UNDP 2001 change process approved by the Executive Board in decision 97/15; and also takes note of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (DP/1997/31);

2. *Welcomes* the new format for the presentation of the budget in line with decision 97/6, item 5, on the harmonization of budget presentations;

3. *Approves* the proposals by the Administrator as contained in paragraphs 57 to 61 of document DP/1997/23, including with regard to the collection of government contributions towards local office costs, taking into

account the special circumstances of low-income countries, including small island developing States;

4. *Approves* the proposal by the Administrator as contained in paragraphs 103 to 114 of document DP/1997/23 on the staffing formula for adding supplementary staff at United Nations Volunteers headquarters;

5. *Takes note* of the report of the Administrator on development support services as contained in paragraphs 116 to 125 of document DP/1997/23;

6. *Requests* the Administrator, in accordance with the existing legal framework of the United Nations Development Programme, in particular Governing Council decision 71/14, and taking into account the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, to ensure that all the heads of the regional bureaux are accorded the same rank and to amend the budget for the 1998-1999 biennium accordingly; and to review the numbers of high-level positions at headquarters, as recommended by the Advisory Committee;

7. *Approves* gross appropriations in the amount of $590,593.500 for the purposes indicated below and resolves that income estimates of $72,127,000 shall be used to offset the gross appropriations, resulting in estimated net appropriations of $518,466,500;

1998-1999 biennial support budgets
(Thousands of United States dollars)

Programme support:		
Country offices		273 864.2
Headquarters		64 810.2
	Subtotal	338 674.4
Management and administration		127 019.5
Support to operational activities of the United Nations:		
Country offices/OUNS		98 913.0
Inter-Agency Procurement Services Office		3 896.6
United Nations Volunteers		30 880.3
	Subtotal	133 689.9
Total gross appropriations		599 383.8
Adjustment		(8 790.3)
Adjusted total gross appropriations		590 593.5
less: Estimated income		72 127.0
Estimated net appropriations		518 466.5

8. Authorizes the Administrator, to redeploy resources between appropriation lines up to a maximum of 5 per cent of the appropriation line to which the resources are redeployed;

9. Requests the Administrator to report to the Executive Board at its third regular session 1998 on progress in implementing the biennial support budget for the biennium 1998-1999, taking into account relevant developments in the interim, including, inter alia, United Nations reform, progress on the implementation of the UNDP 2001 change process, the review of levels of core contributions, the effect of currency exchange fluctuations, the nature and type of country presence, taking into account the operational complexity of the programme, and the Executive Board discussions on other resources and, at that time, to make any necessary recommendations.

II. FUNDS

1. Takes note of the report of the Administrator on the biennial support budget estimates for the biennium 1998-1999 for the United Nations Capital Development Fund, the United Nations Fund for Women, the Office to Combat Desertification and Drought and the United Nations Revolving Fund for Natural Resources Exploration, as contained in document DP/1997/23;

2. Welcomes the new presentation of the budgets in line with decision 97/6, item 5, on the harmonization of budget presentations;

3. Approves gross appropriations for each of the Funds as follows:

1998-1999 biennial support budgets
(Thousands of United States dollars)

	UNCDF	UNRFNRE	UNIFEM	UNSO
Total appropriations	12 864.0	1 532.8	10 695.2	5 852.4

4. Requests the Administrator to report to the Executive Board at its third regular session in 1998 on progress in implementing the biennial support budget for the biennium 1998-1999 for each of the funds, taking into account relevant developments in the interim and, at that time, to make any necessary recommendations.

19 September 1997

B. Annual review of the financial situation, 1996

117. The Acting Assistant Administrator and Director, Bureau for Financial and Administrative Services, introduced the reports of the Administrator on the annual review of the financial situation, 1996 (DP/1997/24), detailed information relating to the 1996 annual review of the financial situation (DP/1997/24/Add.1), and the status of management services agreements (MSAs)

(DP/1997/24/Add.2); the report on subcontracts awarded and major equipment ordered produced by the Inter-Agency Procurement Services Office (DP/1997/25*); and the report of the Administrator on information on United Nations system technical cooperation expenditure, 1996 (DP/1997/30), and its addendum on information on United Nations system regular and extrabudgetary technical cooperation expenditures financed from sources other than UNDP, 1996 (DP/1997/30/Add.1).

118. Many speakers commented on the improved format and clarity of presentation of information in the annual review of the financial situation, 1996. Of primary concern to most delegations was the continuing reduction of voluntary contributions to UNDP core resources, which had led to a situation in which the planning figure of $3.3 billion in core contributions for the period 1997 to 1999 included in Executive Board decision 95/23 could not be realized. The fact that country cooperation frameworks were thus being implemented at only about 70 per cent of the expected level was noted by several speakers. One speaker, on behalf of the African Group, underlined the concern about the core resource situation and hoped that UNDP would soon be on more stable financial ground, as reduced core contributions were directly linked to an increase in poverty and a decrease in economic and social progress. It was hoped that developed countries would resume responsibility for their obligations to UNDP in order that United Nations reform could take place. Some speakers foresaw cash management problems resulting from the situation as presented. Some delegations cited the need for payment of GLOC owed to UNDP.

119. Several queries were raised by one delegation, including with regard to contributions to UNDP from the private sector, on the rental of local offices, and about the maintenance of the operational reserve in United States dollars. Some speakers requested the inclusion of projections of the financial situation for two succeeding years in future reports.

120. The need to analyse the financial situation of UNDP in light of overall United Nations reform was underlined, including with regard to decreased administrative budgets and enhanced audit and monitoring systems. One speaker stated that UNDP had a distinctive role in the United Nations and had performed well. In that regard, all donors had a responsibility to fulfil their mandate.

121. Late payments of pledged contributions were another cause for concern for many speakers. Some delegations favoured the development of new funding mechanisms, including multi-year negotiated pledges. Round tables and expanded consolidated appeal processes were possible options. One delegation, supported by several others, suggested that payments of core contributions be made in four equal instalments throughout the course of the year, as a means to enhance predictability of funding. Several delegations noted that the present discussion was linked to the development of a new funding strategy by UNDP, which would be taken up by the Executive Board in the coming months. Some speakers questioned the likelihood that contributions to UNDP would increase as stated in paragraph 39 of DP/1997/24.

122. While the strong United States dollar had led to a decline in the converted value of contributions made in other currencies, it was noted that it had

benefited UNDP with regard to programme costs for country offices, which often had expenses in dollars.

123. The improvement of programme delivery rates and resultant lowering of liquidity levels was noted with satisfaction by many delegations. It seemed to some speakers, however, that the high rate of programme delivery could not be maintained. In that regard, one speaker suggested that the rate of programme delivery should be commensurate with the amount of funding, and stated that the $200 million level of the operational reserve should be maintained.

124. According to many delegations, the continued rise in non-core contributions had led to the need to hold an in-depth discussion on the issue, including on how those contributions would be reported to the Executive Board. Some speakers underlined the need to have a separate annual accounting to the Board on non-core contributions. Several delegations underscored the need for non-core contributions to be used for capacity-building in programme countries. It was noted that reporting on and processing non-core contributions often added to the administrative workload of UNDP. The President stated that the Board would take up the issue at its first regular session 1998.

125. Queries were raised about the administrative arrangements relating to MSAs, including whether, statistically, the resources were considered to be part of UNDP resources. Some delegations requested that greater analysis on the use of MSAs be provided to the Executive Board, including with regard to the subcomponents of those agreements. Information was sought on the degree of competition for the contracts, cost-recovery by UNDP and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), and whether the UNOPS unit that managed the MSAs was being funded from UNDP core resources.

126. One speaker noted that while there were no specific comments on document DP/1997/30 and its addendum, it was a useful resource and should be continued.

127. The Acting Assistant Administrator responded to the questions and comments raised. She noted that many of the interventions referred to non-core contributions, an issue that would be addressed by the Executive Board at its first regular session 1998. The statements on obtaining more predictable funding were welcomed. She confirmed that the accounting of cost-sharing would be separated from that of core resources in reports for the 1998-1999 biennium. In response to a query raised regarding arrears in payments on pledged contributions, she explained that only $25 million was now in arrears for core contributions and that, technically, there could not be arrears for cost-sharing contributions. The request for forecasts in the annual review of the financial situation was noted.

128. MSAs would be taken up in more detail under the discussion of the UNOPS budget during the session. In response to the queries raised, she explained stated that MSAs were managed by UNDP because UNOPS, as an executing agency, needed to cooperate with a funding organization such as UNDP in order to engage in such activities. Activities needed to be in harmony with the mandate of UNDP. According to custom, UNOPS was the sole implementing partner of MSAs, but it was not compulsory that they be implemented by UNOPS. UNDP did not provide core funding to UNOPS.

129. With regard to the other queries raised, she stated that maintaining the operational reserve in United States dollars protected UNDP and noted that the issue would be taken up bilaterally with the delegation that had raised the question. A private-sector contribution from the Hewlett Packard Corporation had involved provision of equipment to the Sustainable Development Networking Programme and not procurement. The issue of the Reserve for Field Accommodation would be taken up later in the session. The Acting Assistant Administrator noted that, with regard to common premises, the organizations of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy would not be approached at the present time for payments.

130. The Executive Board took note of reports of the Administrator on the financial situation, 1996 (DP/1997/24), detailed information relating to the annual review of the financial situation, 1996 (DP/1997/24/Add.1), and the status of management service agreements (DP/1997/24/Add.2); the report on subcontracts awarded and major equipment ordered (DP/1997/25*); and the report of the Administrator on information on United Nations system technical cooperation expenditure, 1996 (DP/1997/30) and its addendum on information on United Nations system regular and extrabudgetary technical cooperation expenditures financed from sources other than UNDP (DP/1997/30/Add.1).

IV. RESOURCES AND FUNDING STRATEGY

131. The Administrator introduced the conference room paper on the development of a sustainable funding strategy for UNDP (DP/1997/CRP.23). The aim of the paper was to initiate discussion on a realistic funding strategy for UNDP. The strategy needed to be worked out as a compact between the Executive Board and UNDP. Executive Board decision 94/14, which defined the mandate of UNDP, was reinforced by the Secretary-General in his reform proposals, in particular in the emphasis he placed on the United Nations role in development. In that regard, the Administrator underlined his commitment to fulfilling both the envisaged role of UNDP in the Track II proposals of the Secretary-General as well as reform within UNDP itself. However, in order to fulfil those mandates, UNDP needed adequate funding.

132. To qualify for such funding, the Administrator expressed his commitment to the Executive Board to ensure that UNDP fulfilled the implementation of UNDP 2001, in accordance with Executive Board decision 97/15; reported back to donors on the use of their contributions; and identified new mechanisms for raising funds.

133. The increasing number of contributions from programme countries, despite their limited financial resources, was particularly welcomed. Programme countries had a key role to play in ensuring the successful implementation of a funding strategy by ensuring the maximum impact on development of the resources made available through UNDP, reporting on results achieved and their need for UNDP assistance, and contributing resources to UNDP.

134. The Administrator also noted that there could be no successful funding strategy for UNDP without the ownership and commitment of the donor community. He emphasized that the downward trend in official development assistance must be

reversed if UNDP was to respond meaningfully to the demands for support from a diverse range of programme countries. Donors could help UNDP by clarifying their expectations, concerns and interests; by sharing critical information on how UNDP could best promote itself; and by translating legislation adopted into concrete financial terms.

135. The conference room paper had been intended as work in progress, as well as a tool for stimulating discussion. The exchange of ideas with the Executive Board would provide an essential contribution towards developing a comprehensive funding strategy for UNDP. The Board could discuss such issues as mobilizing core resources to enable UNDP to meet the needs of programme countries and to fulfil its role in United Nations reform, as well as determining the responsibilities of programme countries, donors, UNDP and the Executive Board in that regard. Informal discussions on the basis of document DP/1997/CRP.23 would begin later in the year.

136. The Executive Board decided to continue consideration of UNDP resources and funding strategy at its first regular session 1998.

V. UNOPS: FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

137. The Executive Director introduced the four reports before the Executive Board pertaining to UNOPS: risk management, reserves and surplus income (DP/1997/26); follow-up to recommendations of the report of the Board of Auditors (A/51/5/Add.10) (DP/1997/27); the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (DP/1997/28); and the revised budget estimates of the biennium 1996-1997 and budget estimates for the biennium 1998-1999 (DP/1997/29).

138. With regard to the budget estimates, the Executive Director noted that UNOPS performance through the month of August, both in terms of business acquisition and service delivery, gave clear indications that the targets specified in the UNOPS business plan and budget proposals were realistic and attainable. He also elaborated on some of the considerations that had influenced the UNOPS proposals for risk management and the level of the UNOPS operational reserve. The Executive Director announced the informal distribution of the 1997 business plan, 1996 financial statements, statistical trend tables, and two new brochures on cooperation with the International Fund for Agriculture and Development and on management services agreements.

139. Twelve delegations took the floor to comment on the documents, each of which expressed satisfaction with the financial picture presented by UNOPS, with one delegation expressing hope that the business-like approach of UNOPS might serve as an example for other United Nations organizations. Several delegations asked for further details about the intentions of UNOPS with regard to the information systems area, with some delegations recommending that UNOPS familiarize itself with approaches being taken by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). A number of delegations requested additional clarification on the UNOPS decentralization plans and on its efforts to diversify its client base. Several delegations urged UNOPS to ensure that audit recommendations were carried out while some requested further details on some of the recommendations.

140. A number of delegations commented on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) that the division of labour between UNDP and UNOPS be reviewed, with several endorsing the recommendation and others requesting the views of the Executive Director on the issue.

141. With regard to the proposed reserve level, one delegation expressed concern that the level might be too low and inquired as to where ultimate liability would lie if the reserve proved insufficient.

142. The Executive Director and the Assistant Director, Finance, Control and Administration, noted that the principal objectives of the current information systems review were to document present and future UNOPS business system requirements clearly and objectively, and to compare them against the functionality of the Integrated Management Information System. In that regard, the Executive Board was informed that UNOPS was exploring and would continue to explore the UNICEF approach.

143. The Executive Director, noting that the UNOPS decentralization strategy was principally intended to provide better service to clients, underscored that each decentralized unit was required to adhere to the self-financing principle, generating sufficient income from services to cover its costs. With regard to the questions on client diversification, he stated that UNOPS efforts to work with other members of the United Nations system were modest but encouraging, noting that most such partners preferred to start such collaboration on a pilot basis. The brochures and publications provided to Executive Board members for information were cited as examples of materials UNOPS has developed to help to attract new clients. An update was also provided on UNOPS actions in response to the audit recommendations.

144. Speaking to the issue of the division of labour between UNDP and UNOPS, the Executive Director emphasized that UNOPS operated according to the guidelines established by the Executive Board in prior decisions, notably that UNOPS undertook no funding or fund-raising activities, nor did it have a substantive mandate other than the provision of services. He added that UNOPS was always represented at the country level by the UNDP resident representative and, whenever possible, shared the same premises as UNDP. He also stated that all UNOPS clients chose UNOPS for services from among a wide range of alternatives.

145. The Executive Director agreed that the level of the proposed reserve was on the low end. He stated that UNOPS had decided to put forth a conservative proposal initially, which might be revised in light of experience gained, and in conjunction with the biennial budget submission. With regard to the ultimate liability for claims that might exceed the response capacity of the UNOPS reserve, he noted that for UNDP-funded projects, the Office of Legal Affairs had indicated that ultimate liability might reside with UNDP. It was highly unlikely, however, that such a situation would arise, as the risk analysis had revealed that a large proportion of the risks were covered by contracting clauses that permitted recovery as well as a transfer of risk, whereas the self-insurance element of the operational reserve had been intended to cover only a residual risk as may arise.

146. The Executive Board took note of the report of ACABQ contained in document DP/1997/28, and adopted the following decisions on UNOPS risk management, reserves and surplus income (DP/1997/26); UNOPS revised budget estimates for the biennium 1996-1997 and budget estimates for the biennium 1998-1999 (DP/1997/29); and follow-up to the recommendations of the report of the Board of Auditors (A/51/5/Add.10) (DP/1997/27), respectively:

97/21. UNOPS: Risk management, reserves and surplus income

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Office for Project Services (DP/1997/26);

2. Decides to establish the level of the UNOPS operational reserve at 4 per cent of the combined expenditure on administrative and project budgets of the previous year, and to transfer unspent income to the reserve account until such level is reached;

3. Approves the maintenance of the operational reserve at the level calculated annually according to the formula in the preceding paragraph;

4. Requests that the Executive Director report on a biennial basis on the appropriateness of the level as set in the present decision;

5. Notes that the Executive Director will continue to report annually on UNOPS income and expenditure levels and on drawdowns from the reserve.

18 September 1997

97/22. UNOPS: Revised budget estimates for the biennium 1996-1997 and budget estimates for the biennium 1998-1999

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the report of the Executive Director on revised budget estimates for the biennium 1996-1997 and budget estimates for the biennium 1998-1999 (DP/1997/29);

2. Approves the revised budget estimates for the 1996-1997 biennium in the amount of $70,579,000;

3. Approves the budget estimates for the 1998-1999 biennium in the amount of $84,700,000;

4. Approves the establishment of 37 additional posts, and the relocation of 1 post from New York to the Abidjan office.

18 September 1997

97/23. Follow-up to recommendations of the report of the Board of Auditors on the United Nations Office for Project Services (A/51/5/Add.10)

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the comments made by the United Nations Office for Projects Services in document DP/1997/27 in response to the recommendations made in the report of the United Nations Board of Auditors for the biennium 1994-1995 (A/51/5/Add.10);

2. Requests the Executive Director to provide the Executive Board, at its annual session 1998, with an updated overview of the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors and an updated timetable indicating the dates when follow-up action will have been completed in the areas that need to be addressed.

18 September 1997

VI. UNDP: COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS

A. Country and regional cooperation frameworks

1. Africa

147. The Executive Board approved the first country cooperation frameworks (CCFs) for: Benin (DP/CCF/BEN/1); Botswana (DP/CCF/BOT/1); Cameroon (DP/CCF/CMR/1); Chad (DP/CCF/CHD/1); Gabon (DP/CCF/GAB/1); Guinea-Bissau (DP/CCF/GBS/1); Malawi (DP/CCF/MLW/1); Mauritius (DP/CCF/MAR/1); Sao Tome and Principe (DP/CCF/STP/1); Senegal (DP/CCF/SEN/1); Seychelles (DP/CCF/SEY/1); and Swaziland (DP/CCF/SWA/1).

148. In accordance with the written request from five members of the Executive Board, the Board discussed the first country cooperation frameworks for the following countries: Angola (DP/CCF/ANG/1); Burkina Faso (DP/CCF/BKF/1); Nigeria (DP/CCF/NIR/1); South Africa (DP/CCF/SAF/1); and Zimbabwe (DP/CCF/ZIM/1).

149. The Executive Board agreed to postpone consideration of the first country cooperation framework for the Republic of the Congo (DP/CCF/PRC/1).

First country cooperation framework for Angola (DP/CCF/ANG/1)

150. The discussion of the first country cooperation framework for Angola focused on questions raised by delegations regarding how the country would implement development activities in the post-conflict period. Delegations raised queries about poverty eradication programmes, landmine clearance, the work of UNDP with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), transition measures in the peace process, and the functioning of the resident coordinator system in Angola. One delegation emphasized the need to involve all rural inhabitants in the peace process. The need to measure impact was also underlined.

151. The UNDP Resident Representative in Angola responded to the comments and queries raised by delegations. He noted that the new framework emphasized capacity- and institution-building, as opposed to the focus in the previous programme on crisis-related work. All work was carried out within a government-defined framework. UNDP sought to strengthen the capacity of national NGOs so that they could eventually take up work in various priority areas. Mine-clearing activities were coordinated by UNDP and executed by the United Nations Office for Project Services, with the involvement of nationals and NGOs.

152. Relations with other United Nations organizations were excellent, in particular with the United Nations Observer Mission in Angola. The framework had been prepared in consultation with other United Nations organizations in Angola. An exit strategy for organizations operating in the humanitarian area was now being prepared. Coordination of those activities would be transferred from the United Nations to the Government, with the support of UNDP and other partners. There were indications that the peace process was progressing, with the reintegration of displaced persons and soldiers, mainly through community-based activities. Community-rehabilitation programmes were helping the Government to coordinate and develop work in that area, with the participation of multilateral and bilateral donors. Programmes planned through the round-table process could now be initiated. The UNDP Resident Representative cited the Community Rehabilitation and National Reconciliation Programme as a demonstration of the Government's approach to poverty eradication, which was now receiving greater attention in the post-conflict period. Sectoral analyses and reviews have been planned, with the involvement of all United Nations organizations.

153. The Executive Board approved the first country cooperation framework for Angola (DP/CCF/ANG/1), with the comments made thereon.

First country cooperation framework for Burkina Faso (DP/CCF/BKF/1)

154. Several delegations stated that they thought the framework was a good document, which contained useful analyses of complex poverty problems. The areas of focus were relevant, as was the strategy as explained in the framework. Implementation of the 20/20 initiative and the emphasis on poverty alleviation was praised. However, the strategic initiative for the elimination of poverty needed clarification with regard to how it was linked with the major thematic areas of UNDP. The priorities of the framework, the role of capacity-building, and the comparative advantages of UNDP would benefit from further elaboration. Questions were raised about cooperation with the World Bank, the roles of the United Nations Capital Development Fund and the United Nations Development Fund for Women, UNDP involvement in agriculture, and the division of labour with other United Nations agencies.

155. Several speakers emphasized the need for enhanced aid coordination in Burkina Faso. One delegation requested further information on cooperation with local partners, in particular NGOs and civil society. Some speakers underlined the importance of performance indicators. One speaker suggested that UNDP could help to develop private business and entrepreneurship in Burkina Faso. In that regard, the framework could place greater emphasis on development of local markets and support for trade. More information on gender-mainstreaming was

also sought. One delegation noted that a regional approach was lacking in the framework.

156. The UNDP Resident Representative in Burkina Faso responded to the comments made and questions raised by delegations. He underlined the major role of UNDP in aid coordination, including through assistance to the Government in preparing a country strategy note and through the preparation of the UNDP advisory note, which had preceded the CCF. Moreover, all donors had participated in the local programme advisory committee meeting on the framework. The UNDP role in coordination with donors in the programming process was continuing in both general and sectoral activities through a local coordination mechanism. Efforts had been made to ensure an appropriate division of labour among United Nations organizations operating in Burkina Faso. The role of UNDP in coordination with the United Nations agencies, including the World Bank, had led to the formulation of two joint programmes on access for all to basic education and primary health care, activities that were co-financed by several United Nations agencies. The UNDP Resident Representative emphasized that the three focus areas at the heart of the mandate of UNDP were linked with the priorities of the Government's development strategy. Initiatives that included the participation of NGOs were in the areas of governance and management of the environment. He also noted that in the focus area of gender, UNDP was cooperating with UNIFEM in Burkina Faso and was also involved in a cooperative effort to provide access to basic education for women. Programmes involving primary health care for women were funded by UNFPA and others. He noted that UNDP provided support for policy dialogue with other donors in the area of promotion of the private sector as well as in the formulation of the Government's agricultural development strategy.

157. The Executive Board approved the first country cooperation framework for Burkina Faso (DP/CCF/BKF/1), with the comments made thereon.

First country cooperation framework for Nigeria (DP/CCF/NIR/1)

158. Several delegations called for the refocusing and resubmission of the first country cooperation framework for Nigeria while other delegations stated that the framework should be adopted at the session. The speakers who asked for resubmission cited queries they had regarding programme delivery, carry-over of resources from the previous cycle, and the degree to which civil society, including grass-roots populations, would benefit from the framework. Some speakers suggested that the activities described in the framework needed channelling through a coordinated planning process as well as enhanced focus. Delegations that supported the CCF cited the thematic areas included in the document as being in line with the purposes and mandates of UNDP as well as meeting the needs of the country. The Latin American and Caribbean Group announced that it had reconsidered its initial support for a postponement and stated that people of Nigeria would be affected by a delay in implementation of the framework.

159. The representative of Nigeria cited the references in the framework to the capacity-building activities of UNDP and urged that the CCF be approved at the session. He underlined the need for development activities in his country and

emphasized that any delay would have a negative impact on poverty eradication in Nigeria, affecting poor people directly.

160. The UNDP Resident Representative in Nigeria recalled an informal dialogue held on the previous day. He noted the steps that had been taken in preparation of the country strategy note and the advisory note, both of which had been reviewed by many partners, including donors, the private sector, and international and national NGOs in Nigeria. The framework set specific objectives, including the reduction of poverty by 20 per cent over the ensuing 10 years and the identification of the poorest of the poor. The framework was demand-driven and utilized the experience of pilot activities conducted in previous years. In fact, it provided a foundation for United Nations organizations to work in Nigeria, including with NGOs. If requested, improvements could be made in the profiles of specific programme activities. He noted that the carry-over was attributable to new initiatives such as the programme approach and national execution. Currently, however, a reassessment of UNDP activities in Nigeria had made a positive impact on programme delivery.

161. One delegation introduced a draft decision on the first country cooperation framework for Nigeria. He stated that his delegation thought it was a good text, which reflected the views expressed during the plenary discussion.

162. The Executive Board approved the following decision:

97/25. First country cooperation framework for Nigeria

The Executive Board

Approves the first country cooperation framework for Nigeria (DP/CCF/NIR/1) with the provision that the Administrator develop programmes in the areas identified in the framework using the following guidelines:

(a) The programmes must directly benefit the poorest sections of the population and deliver their benefits at the grass-roots level;

(b) The components of the programmes must be prepared with the full participation of the intended beneficiaries, in particular from the poorest sections of the community, and implemented through organizations of civil society, including national and international non-governmental organizations;

(c) The programme should be developed with clear monitoring components to enable the Administrator to report back to the Executive Board at its third regular session in 1998 on the content of the programme and to conduct regular evaluations of the impact of the programme at not less than annual intervals thereafter.

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163. The representative of Nigeria thanked the Executive Board for its approval of the first country cooperation framework for Nigeria. Another speaker expressed appreciation for the flexibility of the Board in considering the

framework and stated that the concerns expressed in the discussion had been addressed in the decision.

First country cooperation framework for South Africa (DP/CCF/SAF/1)

164. A number of delegations commented on the first country cooperation framework for South Africa. One delegation stated that the framework did not refer to the government strategy for Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR), and that the linkage among programmes was not clear. The speaker also requested information on the role of South Africa in the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC). Another delegation requested further information on the findings of a recent World Bank study on poverty alleviation in South Africa and how it related to the work of UNDP in the area. The speaker expressed support for the UNDP programme in poverty eradication, suggesting that the programme focus on areas where there would be a proven advantage. National expertise should be involved as much as possible. A third speaker requested further information on the development of a 'United Nations House' in South Africa.

165. The UNDP Resident Representative in South Africa noted that the CCF was the first programming document on cooperation with South Africa ever presented to UNDP. The framework reflected the policies outlined in the Reconstruction and Development Programme adopted by the Government in 1994, and drew on sectoral and thematic papers prepared since that date, as well as on the macroeconomic GEAR strategy adopted in 1996, which had been mentioned in the framework (see DP/CCF/SAF/1, para. 15). He underlined the importance of ensuring that the macroeconomic strategy was complemented by the human development strategy the Government had announced in a parliamentary debate on poverty in October 1996. He noted that South Africa was an economic giant in the subregion. UNDP was helping the country in its reintegration into the region through participation in SADC, for example, through activities in the area of governance, including the proposed regional human development report. In response to the query raised about the relationship of the recent World Bank study on poverty alleviation in South Africa to the work of UNDP in that area, the UNDP Resident Representative responded that UNDP had worked closely with the World Bank and the United Kingdom's Department of International Development to produce a comprehensive study on poverty and inequality. The report of that study, building on prior data collection and analysis sponsored by the World Bank on the status of poverty, would focus on the impact of government policies on the poor. It was currently being reviewed by an interdepartmental committee at the ministerial level. In that context, broader indicators to measure all aspects of poverty in the country were being developed. He noted that the increase in crime in South Africa was of particular concern to the poor. Small- and medium-scale enterprise development was one of the means for helping to create jobs - a central element of poverty eradication. With regard to the United Nations House, the UNDP Resident Representative stated that all United Nations organizations operating in South Africa were currently housed in Pretoria in a facility provided by the Government, except for the International Labour Organization and the World Bank. A decision of the Cabinet on the United Nations House also envisaged the provision of a second United Nations facility in Cape Town. The origin of the Secretary-General's decision to declare the Pretoria facility as the first United Nations House had resulted from his

appreciation of the initiatives taken by the Government of South Africa and the United Nations country team during his recent visit to the country.

166. The Executive Board approved the first country cooperation framework for South Africa (DP/CCF/SAF/1), with the comments made thereon.

First country cooperation framework for Zimbabwe (DP/CCF/ZIM/1)

167. Several delegations commended UNDP for the well-balanced and focused first country cooperation framework for Zimbabwe. The framework was ambitious yet realistic. Its emphasis on the programme approach and use of national execution was commendable. The link between results and lessons of past cooperation could have been more specific, however, and clarification of the use of the percentage regarding the effectiveness of the third country programme was sought (see DP/CCF/ZIM/1, para. 18). Some negative experiences could also have been considered. The description of the comparative advantages of UNDP could also have been enhanced, as it described some activities in which other organizations might have an advantage. An amount of $500,000 had been allocated for a pilot project to enable greater coherence in the implementation of United Nations programmes in Zimbabwe. That project was aimed at promoting closer country-level integration in terms of common premises and services, budgeting, and the division of labour based on comparative strengths. Comments on the progress of that initiative would be welcomed. Another delegation suggested that civil service reforms should receive more attention in Zimbabwe. Cross-cutting themes such as HIV/AIDS, gender and governance should also receive greater attention. One speaker underlined the need for UNDP to concentrate on capacity-building in Zimbabwe. More specific priority-setting was required.

168. The UNDP Deputy Resident Representative in Zimbabwe responded to the comments and queries raised. She noted that UNDP had developed a positive role in macroeconomic reform as a neutral partner and that it was the Government which had affirmed the organization's comparative advantage in that area. UNDP was working closely with the Bretton Woods institutions and the Government of Sweden in the sector, she added. The second phase of the government reform programme was being supported by UNDP. With regard to the desk study on the preliminary impact of projects financed under the third country programme referred to in paragraph 18 of document DP/CCF/ZIM/1, the UNDP Deputy Resident Representative noted that while the study was not extremely detailed, it had found that national execution was successful in Zimbabwe because of the Government's ownership and insurance of sustainability, thus resulting in an 80 per cent success rate. No expatriates were employed in UNDP programmes, only nationals of Zimbabwe. The support of the Government of Sweden was much appreciated, and concrete steps had already been taken towards developing a more unified United Nations country team. A retreat involving 18 United Nations organizations and 70 staff members was planned to discuss joint programming and common services. Participants in the retreat would review a draft common country assessment involving the 18 United Nations organizations present in Zimbabwe, making it a unique document, she added. An inter-agency unit financed by UNDP and other United Nations agencies was being established. She noted that her position had been designated as UNDP Programme Director, enabling the UNDP Resident Representative to emphasize his role as Resident Coordinator in inter-agency matters, with positive results in collaboration. In the area of

governance, UNDP was providing support to 'Vision 2020', a draft national long-term planning document. It was also assisting the Government in developing its use of the Internet, promoting an open exchange of information.

169. The Executive Board approved the first country cooperation framework for Zimbabwe (DP/CCF/ZIM/1), with the comments made thereon.

2. Asia and the Pacific

170. The Executive Board approved the first country cooperation frameworks (CCFs) for: Fiji (DP/CCF/FIJ/1); the Federated States of Micronesia (DP/CCF/FSM/1); Kiribati (DP/CCF/KIR/1); the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DP/CCF/DRK/1); Malaysia (DP/CCF/MAL/1); Maldives (DP/CCF/MDV/1); the Marshall Islands (DP/CCF/MAS/1); Nepal (DP/CCF/NEP/1); Niue (DP/CCF/NIU/1); Palau (DP/CCF/PAU/1); the Philippines (DP/CCF/PHI/1); Samoa (DP/CCF/SAM/1); the Solomon Islands (DP/CCF/SOI/1); Sri Lanka (DP/CCF/SRL/1); Thailand (DP/CCF/THA/1); Tonga (DP/CCF/TON/1); Tuvalu (DP/CCF/TUV/1); and Vanuatu (DP/CCF/VAN/1).

171. In accordance with the written request of five members of the Executive Board, the Board discussed the first country cooperation frameworks for Cambodia (DP/CCF/CMB/1) and Pakistan (DP/CCF/PAK/1).

First country cooperation framework for Cambodia (DP/CCF/CMB/1)

172. Many delegations took the floor in support of the first country cooperation framework for Cambodia (DP/CCF/CMB/1). The document was comprehensive, clear and well written, detailed, well focused, and contained good ideas. It was noted that there had been an effective collaborative process at the country level in preparing the framework. Speakers also thanked UNDP for the useful informal meeting on the CCF held during the session, which had enabled them to clarify issues about which they had questions. One delegation noted with approval the emphasis on marginalized groups and electoral assistance in the framework. Other speakers cited UNDP cooperation with regard to the country's transition, democratization, social protection and environmental sustainability. Poverty alleviation was the main element of the framework, one speaker noted, and the presence of UNDP was crucial, including with regard to security and creating an enabling environment. Several other speakers took the floor to highlight various aspects of the role of UNDP in Cambodia that they found to be relevant and useful. One delegation suggested that the strategy of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, 'Shaping the 21st Century: the Contribution of Development Co-operation', be applied in cooperation with Cambodia. The President of the Board pointed out that the Cambodia country team had participated in the discussions at the last session of the Economic and Social Council. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific thanked the Executive Board for its comments and stated that UNDP would implement the suggestions made by delegations.

173. The Executive Board approved the first CCF for Cambodia (DP/CCF/CMB/1), with the comments made thereon.

First country cooperation framework for Pakistan (DP/CCF/PAK/1)

174. Many speakers took the floor to express appreciation for the first country cooperation framework for Pakistan. The document was clear, analytical and well written, and demonstrated that UNDP had achieved exemplary cooperation in that country. Several speakers stated that they had received favourable comments from their embassies in Islamabad. The UNDP Resident Representative's role in coordination was viewed as excellent. UNDP was thought to have a comparative advantage in the focus area of governance, in particular in building capacity among non-governmental and community-based organizations. The importance of the gender component was emphasized. One delegation cited the Social Action Programme as a programme with positive results, which should be continued. The overall programme conformed to national priorities and emphasized the use of national execution.

175. Several queries were raised, including with regard to the focus areas of governance and gender, relating to the legal situation of non-governmental and community-based organizations and whether UNDP itself was implementing programmes in the country.

176. The representative of Pakistan acknowledged the assistance from UNDP over the years. The CCF had been prepared through an interactive process, in harmony with the country's ninth five-year plan. The gender component was closely linked with the Beijing Platform for Action. He noted that community-based NGOs played a key role in programme activities. The present legal environment was conducive to the work of NGOs. UNDP support for the Local Dialogue Group process, as a complement to the work of the Pakistan Consortium, was greatly appreciated.

177. The UNDP Resident Representative in Pakistan responded to the comments made. He noted that UNDP had supported a national dialogue on the role of NGOs in Pakistan and that there was full collaboration with the NGO community. The regulatory framework for NGOs was being reviewed by the Government. He further pointed out that the current expectations being placed on civil society organizations exceeded their existing capacity, with many donors and the Government looking to NGOs to carry out many activities. Capacity-building in that area was therefore badly needed.

178. With regard to programme focus, he underlined that activities were being carried out in the context of a modest target for resources assignment from the core (TRAC) allocation. The areas of governance and gender were indeed major elements of the programme, with close interconnections. The recent electoral processes had been supported by UNDP, including the provision of grants to NGOs engaged in educating women on their voting rights. He noted that a National Commission for the Implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women recently submitted a report, the recommendations of which were currently being reviewed by the Government. Programmes in the third area, sustainable livelihoods, were carried out principally at the community level, especially in the north of Pakistan. Some 50 per cent of the community mobilizers were women.

179. There had been a pragmatic response to national execution in Pakistan, the UNDP Resident Representative stated. National management of programmes was considered essential to successful development cooperation, and was therefore built into every programme. However, the Government reserved the right to request UNDP, the United Nations Office for Project Services, or a United Nations specialized agency to support the implementation of programmes whenever necessary.

180. The Executive Board approved the first country cooperation framework for Pakistan (DP/CCF/PAK/1), with the comments made thereon.

181. Speaking after the approval of the framework, the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations thanked the Executive Board and UNDP for its support and understanding. His country faced a difficult development challenge, given its population, which was one of the largest in Asia. The commitment of the UNDP staff in Pakistan and at headquarters was recognized. His Government believed that the framework was a model, particularly for those countries in similar circumstances.

3. Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States

182. The Executive Board approved the first country cooperation frameworks (CCFs) for: Armenia (DP/CCF/ARM/1*); Azerbaijan (DP/CCF/AZE/1); Bulgaria (DP/CCF/BUL/1); Georgia (DP/CCF/GEO/1); Malta (DP/CCF/MAT/1); the Russian Federation (DP/CCF/RUS/1); Saint Helena (DP/CCF/STH/1); Slovenia (DP/CCF/SVN/1); The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (DP/CCF/MCD/1); Turkmenistan (DP/CCF/TUK/1); and Ukraine (DP/CCF/UKR/1).

183. The Executive Board also approved the extension of the fifth country programme for Albania (DP/CP/ALB/5/EXTENSION I).

184. One delegation stated that many of the UNDP programmes for the region were similar in content and approach. In capacity-building, her Government would like to see a stronger link between the strengthening of democratic institutions and civil society. Support for the advancement of women was welcomed but it was not clear if UNDP had an advantage in that area, in comparison with other donors. There was too much focus on cost-sharing resource mobilization. UNDP needed to find a clear role in the region.

185. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States stated that UNDP was working in the area of capacity-building and with civil society. He drew the attention of the Executive Board to the first regional programme for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, which had been approved by the Board at its second regular session 1997, and which had emphasized democracy, development and participation. UNDP was working with parliaments and other democratic institutions. Despite the modest resources for the region, for which UNDP was grateful, much had been accomplished. Donors were invited to contribute to the objectives of programmes determined by the individual Governments, through UNDP as a focal point.

First country cooperation framework for Yugoslavia (DP/CCF/YUG/1)

186. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States also made a statement to the Executive Board on the first country cooperation framework for Yugoslavia. The document contained information on the consultative process that had taken place in the country and the internal programme clearing process of UNDP. Both processes combined added up to a long lead-time between the initiation of discussion of the programme and its review by the Board. In the opinion of UNDP, the focus and activities of the programme were well targeted. However, the transition taking place in the region had its own dynamics and priorities were rapidly changing, including with regard to the role of civil society. As a result, it would take time to develop a programme with a commensurately stronger role for civil society. UNDP would submit to the Board at a later date a framework that was more focused and which strengthened in-country capacity to be part of the national development dialogue.

187. The Assistant Administrator also informed the Executive Board that the Regional Bureau had been active in promoting policy documents prepared by professionals in the region on issues that contributed to the development policy dialogue. A report entitled 'The shrinking state: governance and sustainable human development', focusing on the transition economies in the region, had been distributed at the session.

188. The President informed the Executive Board that a letter signed by the Permanent Representatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Slovenia, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia had been circulated.

189. The Executive Board agreed to postpone the consideration of the first country cooperation framework for the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (DP/CCF/YUG/1).

4. Latin America and the Caribbean

190. The Executive Board approved the first country cooperation frameworks (CCFs) for: Anguilla (DP/CCF/ANL/1); Argentina (DP/CCF/ARG/1); Barbados (DP/CCF/BAR/1); the British Virgin Islands (DP/CCF/BVI/1); Brazil (DP/CCF/BRA/1); Chile (DP/CCF/CHI/1); Cuba (DP/CCF/CUB/1); Dominica (DP/CCF/DMI/1); the Dominican Republic (DP/CCF/DOM/1); El Salvador (DP/CCF/ELS/1); Grenada (DP/CCF/GRN/1); Guyana (DP/CCF/GUY/1); Honduras (DP/CCF/HON/1); Jamaica (DP/CCF/JAM/1); Mexico (DP/CCF/MEX/1); Peru (DP/CCF/PER/1); Saint Lucia (DP/CCF/STL/1); Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (DP/CCF/STV/1); Trinidad and Tobago (DP/CCF/TRI/1); Uruguay (DP/CCF/URU/1); and Venezuela (DP/CCF/VEN/1).

191. In accordance with the written request from five members of the Executive Board, the Executive Board discussed the first country cooperation framework for Peru (DP/CCF/PER/1).

192. The Executive Board also approved the extension of the third country programme for Antigua and Barbuda (DP/CP/ANT/3/EXTENSION I); the extension of the third country programme for the Cayman Islands (DP/CP/CAY/3/EXTENSION I); the extension of the fifth country programme for Costa Rica (DP/CP/COS/5/EXTENSION I); the extension of the fifth

country programme for Paraguay (DP/CP/PAR/5/EXTENSION I); the extension of the third country programme for Saint Kitts and Nevis (DP/CP/STK/3/EXTENSION I); and the extension of the third country programme for the Turks and Caicos Islands (DP/CP/TCI/3/EXTENSION I).

193. The Deputy Director of the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean requested that the Executive Board consider postponement of the approval of the first country cooperation framework for Montserrat (DP/CCF/MOT/1) and to endorse the elaboration of a package of emergency assistance to be made available within the provisions of target for resource assignment from the core (TRAC) line 1.1.3, as Montserrat was a country in special circumstances. The Deputy Director also drew attention to the need to reconsider Montserrat's status as a net contributor country when considering the first CCF. The Governments of Montserrat and the United Kingdom had been fully consulted on the matter.

194. The Executive Board agreed to postpone consideration of the first country cooperation framework for Montserrat and endorsed the provision of emergency assistance, to be accommodated under TRAC line 1.1.3.

195. One delegation underlined the severe devastation in Montserrat and thanked the Executive Board for endorsing the emergency relief measures under TRAC line 1.1.3. The speaker suggested that the net contributor country status of Montserrat be reconsidered, as the country was now in a special development situation. The Caribbean Community was cooperating with the Government of Montserrat. It was hoped that the framework could be adjusted and approved by the Executive Board in the near future.

196. Another delegation expressed its support for the framework while agreeing that the decision to postpone its approval was sensible.

First country cooperation framework for Peru (DP/CCF/PER/1)

197. Several delegations commented that the first country cooperation framework for Peru did not show sufficient focus. An explanation of the role and elements of third-party cost-sharing needed more clarification, including how it differed from government cost-sharing. Further explanation of how the programme would be monitored and evaluated should be incorporated. One delegation requested more information on several aspects of the framework, including UNDP cooperation with the World Bank, the nature of support to the modernization of the State, and whether all activities contained in the programme were in accordance with the UNDP mandate. Another delegation raised a query about whether gender concerns were sufficiently addressed in the programme. Two delegations expressed their approval of the framework.

198. The representative of Peru stated that the framework was a clear example of taking concrete action within broad priority areas, for example, in the areas of good governance and the environment, including through the Capacity 21 programme. He underlined the fact that the programme would be monitored and evaluated properly.

199. The Deputy Director of the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean, who had previously served as the UNDP Resident Representative in Peru, emphasized the difficult conditions created by internal conflicts that had characterized life in that country in the recent past. He urged the Executive Board to look at the first CCF in that context. In response to one of the queries raised, he stated that any lack of clarity in the document was not related to the volume of resources for the programme. In response to the queries raised regarding the nature of UNDP cooperation in Peru, he reiterated what was explained in the framework, that UNDP was the first link in a 'strategic chain', in which it first provided technical advice on the design of legal frameworks and strategies, and then helped to establish management instruments. For example, in the privatization process, which had involved the sale or liquidation of more than 150 private enterprises in Peru, UNDP was helping to implement the process with other participants, including the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). The role of UNDP was to bring together consultants and firms in alliance with IDB. Funding came from a number of other sources, including the Government, the World Bank, and bilateral programmes. He emphasized the comparative advantage of UNDP in the coordination of United Nations agencies as well as with bilateral programmes. In the focus area of gender, UNDP was supporting the new Ministry for the Advancement of Women and Social Development, as well as working with other authorities who would provide advice to facilitate and improve the status of women in Peru. Activities in the focus area of environment and natural resources included institution-building for conservation and restoration efforts and support to national initiatives aimed at compliance with international agreements.

200. One delegation underlined the need for co-financing funds to be more clearly identified as such in the framework. Another delegation emphasized the need for UNDP to adhere to its mandate despite the large amount of resources it managed in Peru.

201. The Deputy Director of the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean responded that bilateral contributions had indeed been used in collaborative efforts and should be clearly identified. Management of non-core resources by UNDP enabled the country to move ahead in many areas and did not cause the organization to deviate from its mandate. He underlined that the same accountability and criteria applied to the management of core resources also applied to the management of non-core resources. UNDP was supporting the development process in Peru, particularly in the post-conflict area, and saw itself firmly within the mandate of sustainable human development.

202. The Executive Board approved the first country cooperation framework for Peru (DP/CCF/PER/1), with the comments made thereon.

5. Arab States

203. The Executive Board approved the first country cooperation frameworks (CCFs) for: Djibouti (DP/CCF/DJI/1); Egypt (DP/CCF/EGY/1); Jordan (DP/CCF/JOR/1); Kuwait (DP/CCF/KUW/1); Saudi Arabia (DP/CCF/SAU/1); the Sudan (DP/CCF/SUD/1); the Syrian Arab Republic (DP/CCF/SYR/1); the United Arab Emirates (DP/CCF/UAE/1); and Yemen (DP/CCF/YEM/1).

204. The Executive Board also approved the extension of the fifth country programme for the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya (DP/CP/LIB/5/EXTENSION I).

First regional cooperation framework for the Arab States (DP/RCF/RAS/1)

205. The Acting Regional Director of the Regional Bureau for Arab States introduced the first regional cooperation framework for the Arab States (DP/RCF/RAS/1). He stated that the framework was driven by the primary objective of enlarging the enabling environment for sustainable human development in the region, with a special focus on poverty eradication. The framework enjoyed firm regional support, as a result of the extensive process of policy dialogue and consultations with Governments, civil society, regional intergovernmental organizations, financial institutions and United Nations bodies, including the two regional commissions which covered countries in the Arab States region. The design of the framework reflected the substantive and operational lessons resulting from four sets of evaluations and assessment exercises, including the results of the Office for Evaluation and Strategic Planning's 1996 evaluation of global, interregional and regional programmes (Global, interregional and regional programmes: an evaluation of impact).

206. One of the overriding development realities of the region was the stagnating gross domestic product rate, which was undermining the region's capacity to promote sustainable human development and to eradicate poverty. The framework responded to the challenges of the region through a two-pronged approach: supporting economic growth, as an engine of human development, and fostering the efforts of the region to pursue sustainable human development. The framework would concentrate on creating synergies conducive to sustainable human development and on building the capacities of the region's institutions and systems that were crucial to human development. Complete details on implementation of the framework would be provided to the Executive Board at its first regular session 1998.

207. The Acting Regional Director outlined the major features of the framework: the regional poverty eradication strategy; partnership with the International Monetary Fund and other institutions; partnership with the World Bank, the European Union and the European Investment Bank; priority to national execution; linkage with 11 of the planned subprogrammes of the global cooperation framework; work in tandem with the country programmes of the Arab States region; and decentralization of management of the programme to the field, together with strengthened evaluation mechanisms.

208. Many delegations expressed support for the regional cooperation framework for Arab States. Specifically, speakers recognized the inclusion of collaboration with the regional commissions, the implementation of the UNDP policy mandate, and firm support for economic growth in the region, including with regard to trade and privatization. Cooperation with the Intergovernmental Authority for Development and Work on the Nile River Basin were singled out by one delegation as important parts of the regional programme. One speaker requested more information about linkage with social development activities, in particular poverty eradication, and about the inclusion of projects aimed specifically at least developed countries (LDCs) and South-South cooperation.

Information on micro-financing in the region was also sought, and one delegation requested information on gender-mainstreaming.

209. The Acting Regional Director responded to the comments and questions raised. He stated that the stagnation of economic growth in the region was a serious problem, and forecasts were not very encouraging. That was the reason for an emphasis on the economic sector in the framework. He noted that the framework was the result of two years of consultations with national experts. There were some LDCs in the region covered by the Regional Bureau for Arab States. Some specific programmes were directed at LDCs, including micro-credit programmes. While there were no specific South-South programmes elaborated in the framework, the logic of the framework was based on intercountry cooperation and the use of regional expertise. Micro-financing projects were under way in Bahrain, Morocco, and Yemen, in the context of pilot activities. With regard to gender-mainstreaming, he pointed out that women were primary beneficiaries of the regional programme, including through food security programmes and support to women's non-governmental organizations, and as comprising the majority of recipients of micro-credit. Another example was the Centre for Arab Women's Training in Tunisia, which would play a major role in the preparation of national human development reports through its collection of statistical data.

210. The Executive Board approved the first regional cooperation framework for the Arab States (DP/RCF/RAS/1).

B. Global cooperation framework

211. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Development Policy introduced the revised first global cooperation framework (DP/GCF/1/Rev.1).

212. Many delegations welcomed the revised global cooperation framework as an improvement over the earlier version (DP/GCF/1). The concerns expressed by delegations at previous sessions had been addressed. Some speakers stated that while they would approve the global programme, it was still too broad-based and could be further focused. The establishment of benchmarks and indicators, including for all subprogrammes, was essential to the success of the programme. The need for concentration in the areas of governance and gender was emphasized. Funding must be monitored closely. One speaker stated that at a time of limited available funds, regional and country programmes should be supported, rather than global initiatives. Another speaker suggested a rolling resource planning cycle for the global framework and the increased participation of resident representatives in the review process. Many delegations underlined the need for a continued dialogue as the framework evolved, particularly with reference to the development of indicators. One delegation regretted that the document had been received late, which was in violation of the rules established by the General Assembly and by the Executive Board in its rules of procedure. The same delegation noted that, while it was willing to approve the programme on an exceptional basis, it remained sceptical about the results that could be achieved since there was confusion concerning the objectives sought and an absence of fixed priorities. Some speakers noted that the UNDP programme focus would be the subject of a workshop to be held during the following week.

213. It was underlined that UNDP should demonstrate its comparative advantage in the programme and not duplicate the work of other development partners. Incorporation of the outcomes of international global conferences was of particular importance, especially with regard to supporting initiatives at the country level. One delegation stated that the strategy of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, entitled 'Shaping the 21st Century: the Contribution of Development Co-operation', should be applied to the global framework. Linkage between the global and regional programmes should be established.

214. Programme countries, including the African Group, supported the work of the global programme and cited positive examples of its effect in their countries.

215. It was noted that technical cooperation among developing countries activities would be funded under a separate budget line, and not through the global programme.

216. One speaker stated that the list of global programme activities distributed at the session should have been distributed in advance of the session. In that regard, his delegation requested that progress reports on the global programme include a complete list of activities. Annual reviews of the implementation of the programme were also requested, with some speakers suggesting a review by the Executive Board at its annual session 1998, and others advocating a joint review, with the participation of UNFPA and the United Nations Children's Fund, at the second regular session 1998. In response, the President stated that the Bureau would review the options proposed for review of the global programme.

217. The Assistant Administrator responded to the comments and queries posed by delegations. He acknowledged that the list of activities under the global programme should have been included in the document. He noted the variety of products resulting from the global programme and also stated that a host of partnerships had been formed. Good linkages between gender and the areas of governance and environment had been developed. He confirmed that increased attention would be devoted to performance indicators. A primary task was to develop benchmarks and indicators on gender, including in cooperation with the United Nations Development Fund for Women. UNDP was working with the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Bank on poverty eradication indicators. Closer cooperation with donors would be welcomed.

218. The Executive Board approved the revised first global cooperation framework (DP/GCF/1/Rev.1), with the comments made thereon. The framework would be reviewed in 1998, with the inclusion of indicators and a list of activities, as well as an examination of the relationship between the regional and global programmes.

C. General discussion of country cooperation frameworks

219. Following the discussion of country cooperation frameworks in each region, the Executive Board held a general discussion on the process of reviewing the frameworks. Several delegations emphasized the need to have a strengthened monitoring and evaluation component in the frameworks, including performance

indicators and better use of lessons learned. The mid-term review process, which delegations hoped would be spread out more evenly over the sessions, should include a review of the monitoring and evaluation component of the frameworks. Those frameworks which had included performance measures were very useful.

220. Some speakers cited the varying quality of the frameworks, which led to difficulty in determining the nature of the contribution of UNDP to development in certain countries. One delegation requested that there be increased transparency in the UNDP programming process. The speaker noted that the activities in some of the frameworks before the Executive Board for approval at the third regular session had already begun. The need for Board members to have enough time to review the frameworks thoroughly and to obtain comments from their embassies in the countries under consideration was underlined. Availability of documentation on the Internet had facilitated the process to some extent, but the large number of frameworks submitted to the Board for consideration at the third regular session had created difficulties in the review process. A deeper involvement of the Board in the substance of the country cooperation frameworks was needed. Greater involvement of donor representatives at the country level was also suggested. There was support for the continuation of informal briefings with visiting resident representatives during Board sessions. Board field visits were also an excellent way of learning more about the programmes of UNDP and UNFPA. Conclusions of discussions of the country cooperation frameworks during Board sessions must be utilized more often, particularly to determine if those comments had any impact on the frameworks. Joint discussions of UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF programmes could be carried out on an experimental basis. The programming cycles of the three organizations must be coordinated, especially in view of the Secretary-General's proposal to have a United Nations Development Assistance Framework in each country. Support was expressed for the continuation of meetings with individual country teams at the Economic and Social Council, as had been arranged in 1997. One speaker expressed support for the country cooperation frameworks of the Africa region adopted by the Board, particularly those for the lusophone countries.

221. The President requested that the Administrator, as the Convenor of the Executive Committee of the United Nations Development Group, begin coordinating joint presentations to the Executive Boards of Funds and Programmes.

222. The Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Development Policy stated that the comments of Executive Board members on the programming process would be taken into account. He noted that the current programming arrangements had been in place for only one year and that it would take time for them to work as expected. Some of the issues to which the Board referred would be taken up in the context of the 'Focus within the Focus' workshop, which would be held on 22 September 1997. He also underlined that country offices had been instructed to establish proper monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in country cooperation frameworks.

UNFPA SEGMENT

VII. UNFPA: FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

A. Implementation and monitoring of technical support services arrangements

223. The Deputy Executive Director (Programme) introduced the report item on the technical support services (TSS) arrangements of UNFPA, as contained in document DP/FPA/1997/16. In its decision 95/34, the Executive Board had authorized an amount of $107 million to implement the TSS system over the period 1996-1999, including a total of eight Country Support Teams (CSTs) and a number of TSS specialist posts in the headquarters of other United Nations agencies and in the United Nations regional commissions and the regional offices of the World Health Organization (WHO). The Deputy Executive Director (Programme) said that the Fund thought that the CSTs had performed very well in carrying out their functions of providing technical backstopping for national population programmes. The Executive Director had recommended a few adjustments in the CSTs, i.e., the transfer of some posts from the Asia and Pacific region to Africa and to the Arab States and Europe region.

224. The Deputy Executive Director (Programme) also summarized the major conclusions of an independent evaluation of the TSS specialist posts that had been initiated by the Fund in response to Executive Board decision 95/34. The evaluation had come to many of the same conclusions that had been reached in an earlier evaluation in 1994, that is, that the TSS specialist arrangement had not been functioning in a completely satisfactory manner. The evaluation recommended the retention of the TSS specialist posts but proposed that a number of actions be taken to improve their functioning, especially in strengthening communications between the TSS specialists and the CSTs. The recommendation of the evaluation was that the TSS specialist posts should be amalgamated into a single integrated TSS team and that small 'liaison units' should be maintained in the agencies themselves. The agencies, however, were not in favour of that approach, feeling that it would reduce their participation in the TSS system and would weaken the possibilities for integrating population aspects into their regular work programmes. UNFPA recognized the merits of having a multidisciplinary backstopping group as proposed in the evaluation but felt that the financial situation did not allow for the creation of such a team while maintaining support for liaison units in the agencies. The recommendation contained in document DP/FPA/1997/16 was to fill 27 out of the 43 TSS specialist posts authorized by the Board in 1995 - 3 each in the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), WHO and the United Nations Statistical Division; two in the United Nations Population Division; and 1 at UNIFEM, in addition to the existing posts at the United Nations regional commissions and at the regional offices at WHO - and to further streamline the functions of the TSS specialists.

225. In the discussion that followed, one delegation said that it appreciated the candour of the report presented to the Board, which, unlike many United Nations documents, seemed to present both the strengths and weaknesses of the current system fairly. Several delegations said that they concurred with the

views expressed by UNFPA that the CSTs were carrying out effective work and that the composition of the teams seemed to respond to the needs of the countries in the various regions for technical support. Several delegations said that they particularly supported proposals to strengthen the CST teams in Africa; however, two other delegations asked for explanations about the concomitant reduction of posts in Asia.

226. In reviewing the recommendations concerning the TSS specialist posts, several delegations said that they would like to have more time to look at the recommendations of the evaluation. One delegation said that paragraph 16 of document DP/FPA/1997/16, which stated that '... overall [the TSS specialist arrangement] is not functioning in a satisfactory manner ...', was inconsistent with the recommendation that the TSS system be continued through 1999, albeit with a reduced number of posts. One delegation said that the TSS specialist posts had been evaluated twice, however the results of those evaluations did not appear to have been given due consideration in the recommendations that were being made to the Board. The same delegation suggested that TSS specialist arrangements were perhaps not the best means of promoting collaboration between the agencies and that other cross-fertilization mechanisms needed to be looked at. Another delegation said that the functions of the TSS specialists were not entirely clear, and several delegations requested more information, including from the representatives of the agencies themselves, on the value added by the TSS specialist posts in implementing the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). In sum, several delegations said that they did not find the arguments for continuing the TSS specialist posts at the level indicated in document DP/FPA/1997/16 to be convincing.

227. However, several other delegations said that they endorsed the proposals in document DP/FPA/1997/16, stating that the Fund had reviewed the options and had reached agreements with the agencies involved and that those agreements should be honoured. One delegation said that it would like to review the proposals in light of the biennial support budget for 1998-1999 that was to be taken up later in the session and consider whether they represented the best use of resources or not.

228. Several delegations requested information on the interaction between the CSTs and national and international experts. They wanted to know to what extent national experts were called upon in backstopping population programmes and, tied to that, how the system was helping to build national capacity. One delegation suggested the development of indicators to assess the capacity-building contributions of the CSTs. One delegation also wanted more information on the issue of the cost-efficiency of the CST advisers as compared with the use of international experts on a consultant basis. Another delegation requested information on how the TSS system was linked to the United Nations reform process.

229. One delegation asked why the TSS specialists in regional offices tended to function better than those in specialized agency headquarters, as had been indicated by the evaluation. Another delegate said that, in his view, the main shortcoming seemed to be the lack of interaction between the CSTs and TSS specialists and asked, as did another delegation, what measures were being taken

to improve such interaction. Two delegations asked for clarification on the nature of the legal agreements between the Fund and the United Nations agencies. One delegation requested assurances that the subregional CST and the Fund's proposed new support office in Kazakhstan would not have overlapping functions. Another delegation asked what proportion of the resources of the CST in Amman, Jordan, were being devoted to the Arab States. One delegation stressed the need to make the roster of consultants accessible to the Governments of the programme countries.

230. In her response, the Deputy Executive Director (Programme) noted that the TSS system helped the Fund maintain links with other United Nations agencies and currently seemed like the best system available, given the limitations on resources. Extensive discussions had been held with the agencies, and all parties had agreed on actions to be taken to strengthen the effectiveness of the TSS specialists, both within their agencies and in collaborating with the CSTs. In the past, the role of the TSS specialists had sometimes, and quite inadvertently, been open to interpretation - hence their functions had varied considerably between one agency and another. The Fund had, of course, defined the functions of the TSS specialists in the past; however the scope of their activities had proven to be too broad. New guidelines had been agreed upon that made it clear that the TSS specialists would focus on two roles: (a) backstopping activities, for which work plans would be developed to ensure a multidisciplinary approach; and (b) advocacy on population, including reproductive health, issues within the agencies.

231. The Deputy Executive Director (Programme) reiterated that the TSS system was set up so that, in the first instance, national experts were sought in providing technical support for population programmes. Only when that expertise was not available was recourse had to the CSTs or to the TSS specialists. Efforts were being made to expand and promote utilization of national expertise through the development of rosters maintained in the country offices and by the CSTs. Further, the CST advisers worked closely with national counterparts, thereby contributing to capacity-building efforts. She agreed on the need to develop a system of indicators for capacity-building and expected the absorptive capacity study that the Fund was in the process of carrying out to help in that regard. Regarding the question of cost efficiency, she disagreed that use of consultants was less costly in all cases. She pointed out the importance of interaction with the field and of the multidisciplinary approach that was provided by the CSTs. Consultants were utilized for specialized activities that could not be accomplished by the CSTs or TSS specialists on their own.

232. In commenting on why the TSS system seemed to work better in the regional commissions, the Deputy Executive Director (Programme) said that she felt it was because the regional commissions were smaller and the TSS specialists were able to function much more often on a one-to-one basis with their colleagues and could therefore perform their advocacy role better. In addition, the United Nations regional commissions and the WHO regional offices had strong links with the programme countries themselves and that helped to translate policy into action. She emphasized that the system was evolving and that important lessons were being learned over time, which reinforced the need to continuously review the TSS system and its operations. Already, the recent evaluation had led to some immediate improvements. Dialogue between the CSTs and the TSS specialists

had increased through greater use of electronic mail, seminars and thematic meetings, and joint work plans had been initiated between the CSTs and TSS specialists. She acknowledged that the Fund needed to set aside resources so that it could carry out its managerial and substantive coordination roles better and thus improve the functioning of the TSS system.

233. The Deputy Executive Director (Programme) reported that the reduction in the number of CST posts in the Asia and Pacific region had in fact been quite small: two posts in Bangkok, Thailand, had been merged, and in the Suva, Fiji, team there would be a reduction of two posts. However, it was proposed to fill some of the posts that were vacant in Suva, which would actually lead to an increase in the number of staff in place. There were no overlaps in the functions of the subteam stationed in Almaty and the proposed field office in Kazakhstan: the new field office would manage the country programme while the subteam would be called upon for technical backstopping of the programmes throughout the region. She explained that individual posts in the CST in Amman were not assigned to either the Arab States or to Europe. The system responded to country requests as they arose by sending the appropriate specialist to the country, but the vast majority of such requests were from countries in the Arab States subregion. She said that the Fund hoped to develop standard agreements for collaboration with partner agencies. As the rosters of national experts were developed, they would be available from the respective country office or CST.

234. The President of the Executive Board asked the representatives of the specialized agencies who were present if they would like to comment on the proposals before the Board. The representative of FAO, speaking also on behalf of ILO, explained that the current system had three tiers and that it would be unwise to weaken any one of the components. The system had focused its initial priorities on strengthening the country and regional levels, hence the TSS specialist posts had not received as much attention as they deserved, but he was sure that they could work effectively with the other parts of the system. The TSS specialist posts added several valuable elements to the system as a whole: the advocacy role that the specialists performed in their agencies; their help in integrating population concerns into the core programmes of the agencies, which helped to carry out the broader mandate of ICPD; and the backstopping they supplied to the CSTs. He said that the Inter-Agency Task Force discussion of the roles of the TSS specialists had been very productive and had shown ways in which their performance could be enhanced.

235. The representative of WHO noted the findings of the evaluation report as they pertained to WHO, i.e., bringing the concerns of UNFPA into the work of WHO as well as helping to provide direct links between WHO and the UNFPA field offices. The representative of UNESCO emphasized the advocacy role that the TSS specialists played. The representative from the United Nations Statistical Division explained that it functioned as a coordinating body and the technical expertise that it provided was much needed by CSTs and UNFPA country offices; the TSS specialists helped to facilitate the provision of that expertise. The representative of the United Nations Population Division said that the entire TSS system would benefit from the analysis that had been carried out, which would help the system to improve on past weaknesses.

236. The Executive Board adopted the following decision:

97/27. Technical Support Services System of the United Nations Population Fund

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the report on the Technical Support Services system of the United Nations Population Fund as contained in document DP/FPA/1997/16;

2. Endorses the proposals for reconfiguring the Country Support Team adviser posts as contained in paragraphs 23-26 of document DP/FPA/1997/16;

3. Agrees, on a temporary basis for 1998, to the proposals for modifications of the Technical Support Services specialist posts in United Nations agencies and organizations as contained in paragraphs 27-31 of document DP/FPA/1997/16, understanding that any outstanding vacancies in the Technical Support Services specialist posts will not be filled in the interim;

4. Also agrees to review the 'Report on an assessment of the TSS specialist posts at headquarters and regional levels' in relation to document DP/FPA/1997/16 at the second regular session 1998, in particular in regard to the purpose, effectiveness and organization of the Technical Support Services specialist posts, with a view to providing direction for the Technical Support Services specialist arrangements for 1999;

5. Requests the Executive Director to reassess, in 1999, the Technical Support Services system, including an analysis of its financial aspects that will be reviewed by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, and to report thereon to the Executive Board at the annual session 1999.

19 September 1997

B. Financial and budgetary matters

237. In the interest of time, the Executive Director introduced the UNFPA financial, budgetary and administrative matters before the Board in a single statement. These included the proposed support budget for the biennium 1998-1999, as contained in document DP/FPA/1997/14; the report of the ACABQ on the proposed biennial support budget (DP/FPA/1997/15); the Fund's annual financial review, 1996 (DP/FPA/1997/13); and the report on the evaluation of UNFPA staff training activities (DP/FPA/1997/11).

238. Before introducing the financial and budgetary questions before the Board, the Executive Director began her statement by reiterating the Fund's strong support for the United Nations reform process that had been initiated by the Secretary-General. She brought delegations up to date on the planning for a follow-up to ICPD, which would include, if approved by the General Assembly, an international forum in 1999 and a report that would be submitted to the

UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board, to the 1999 session of the Economic and Social Council, and to a two-day meeting of the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session, if such an event were agreed to.

239. The Executive Director brought up the question of the potential consequences if the financial targets for population and reproductive health that had been agreed to at ICPD were not realized. She said that the international community had agreed on resource goals that it could easily honour, if it had the will to do so. Those resource goals included contributions to UNFPA, and, albeit still unclear, it appeared that the Fund would not attain its income target of $325 million for 1997, although it hoped to come within 6 to 8 per cent of that figure. One major factor was the strength of the United States dollar, which had reduced the converted value of many pledges. The Executive Director called on the Board to help to find a way for UNFPA, along with other United Nations funds and programmes, to achieve a more stable and assured funding base.

Introduction by the Executive Director

240. In reviewing the financial situation for 1996, as contained in document DP/FPA/1997/13, the Executive Director reported that income in that year had remained static at $308.8 million, a slight decrease of 1.2 per cent from the previous year. Expenditures had slightly exceeded $300 million, leaving $27.2 million in unspent general resources. A major reason for the amount of unspent resources was the uncertainty of the receipt of a few major pledges in the last part of the year, which had forced the Fund to slow down its rate of programme expenditures and had, in fact, forced it to use some funds from its operational reserve at the end of the year in order to meet its financial obligations. The late pledges were subsequently received, and the operational reserve was replenished to its full level of $63 million by mid-January 1997. The Executive Director reported that national execution of UNFPA programme activities had increased by 36 per cent compared to the previous year. The costs for administrative and programme support services were slightly higher in 1996 than in 1995, making up 17.1 per cent of regular resource income compared to 16.1 per cent the year before.

241. In introducing the proposed biennial support budget for 1998-1999 to the Board (DP/FPA/1997/15), the Executive Director began by outlining the strategy that had guided the development of the budget. The four main elements of that strategy were: (a) strengthening operations at the country level; (b) enhancing internal oversight and evaluation; (c) strengthening human resource capabilities; and (d) enhancing the Fund's management information systems. In achieving these goals, the Executive Director proposed to strengthen the staffing of country offices by appointing seven new UNFPA representatives and one new international programme officer (IPO), including two staff who would be reassigned from headquarters, to offices in Chad, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Jordan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Mongolia, the Occupied Palestinian Territories and Turkey. She proposed reassigning two IPO posts from Viet Nam and Nicaragua to Cambodia and Peru. She also asked the Board to approve the creation of 47 other posts in country offices for locally recruited staff. This would allow, among other things, for setting up new support offices in the five Central Asian republics and in Armenia, Georgia and the Russian Federation. In

discussing personnel matters, the Executive Director also brought the Board's attention to the fact that the Secretary-General had reinstated the level of Assistant Secretary-General for the Fund's second Deputy Executive Director post.

242. In other efforts to increase the Fund's human resource capabilities, the Executive Director reported that she was presenting to the Board a report on an evaluation of the Fund's staff training activities (DP/FPA/1997/11) and was requesting a training budget of $2.3 million, 80 per cent of which would be devoted to activities in country offices, which would include measures to implement the recommendations that came out of the evaluation. In improving its management information systems, the Fund would concentrate on the ongoing redesign and redevelopment of the existing core systems, continuing improvements in networking and communications, and upgrading equipment and software to further improve productivity. The total investment, including staff costs, would be $5.5 million, 10 per cent more than the current appropriation.

243. In summarizing her recommendations, the Executive Director said that the proposed support budget would constitute 17.1 per cent of estimated total resources, including multi-bilateral resources, down from 18.4 per cent in the period 1996-1997. The net budget allocated for management and administration of the organization would be 5.1 per cent of total resources compared to 5.6 per cent in the previous biennium. The proposed budget would represent a net decline in resources devoted to headquarters and a slight increase in spending in the country offices, which was necessary in order to strengthen field operations. Returning to the uncertainty regarding the Fund's income that she had mentioned at the beginning of her statement, the Executive Director said it was of paramount concern and that she would, of course, closely watch the resource situation to see that expenditures reflected income received and would adjust as necessary by, for example, increasing vacancy rates in personnel posts, delaying recruitment and reducing operating expenses.

244. The Executive Director said she thought that in approving a support budget the Board should not take a strictly short-term view, but needed to look at the long-term trends of the Fund's growth and at the resources and infrastructure that it needed to carry out its work, as mandated by the Board. She noted that, unlike many agencies, UNFPA had experienced increases in its income in recent years, partly because it was the only major multilateral organization working in its field. She pointed out that it would be relatively easy to reduce the budget, although that would also entail certain costs, but if it later became necessary to expand, the costs just to recruit and train staff would be enormous. As a small organization, the Fund needed to maintain a critical mass of staff and support services no matter what the short-term fluctuations in income were. She further reminded delegations that if UNFPA did not have the staff and resources to carry out its advocacy work, that fact would likely be translated into reduced resources in the future.

245. In discussing the recommendations of ACABQ, as contained in document DP/FPA/1997/15, the Executive Director said that she felt that the rather large number of posts at the P-5 level or higher was justified by the nature of the Fund's activities, which required highly skilled and experienced individuals, especially in carrying out its technical, oversight and evaluation functions and

in managing the country offices. She said that the inclusion of the costs of CSTs in the biennial support budget, as recommended by the ACABQ, did not seem advisable since those posts were clearly programmatic, in that their functions changed quite frequently in relation to programme needs, and that that had been the decision of the Governing Council when the system was set up in 1991. Moreover, the treatment of those costs as presented in the proposed budget was in conformity with the decisions on the harmonization of the UNICEF, UNDP and UNFPA budgets.

246. The Executive Director said that she agreed with the recommendations of ACABQ that the reimbursement of income tax paid to staff members should be charged directly to the voluntary contribution of the donor country that levied such taxes. Therefore, she was presenting to the Board some revised budget tables that reflected a net budget that was $3.8 million lower than the proposed budget in document DP/FPA/1997/14 owing to the inclusion of the income tax reimbursement as income. As a result, the support budget as a percentage of resources would be reduced accordingly from 17.1 per cent to 16.5 per cent. The net budget for management and administration of the organization would be 5.0 per cent. The revised budget tables were attached to the statement of the Executive Director and distributed to the Board together with additional documentation that contained supporting information concerning the budget proposal and the annual financial review.

247. In concluding, the Executive Director emphasized that the proposed biennial support budget was formulated with the aim of enabling UNFPA to implement its activities so that countries could achieve their long-term ICPD goals while keeping administrative costs at a minimum and maintaining a reasonable balance between administrative and programme expenditures. She assured the Board that, as in the past, expenditures would be managed in line with the actual level of resources that were mobilized.

Questions and comments by the Board

248. Many delegations thanked the Executive Director for her comprehensive statement, which had clarified many of the questions that they had about the Fund's financial situation and proposed budget. Some delegations said that they found it useful to discuss all of the financial documents together. Several found the documentation on the budget and the annual financial review to be both well-presented and transparent and were pleased with the budget format, which had been harmonized with the presentations of both UNDP and UNICEF. Many delegations indicated their general support for the budget strategy, especially the focus on strengthening operations at the country level, supporting decentralization and moving some posts from headquarters to the field. These were frequently cited as good examples of positive managerial changes, as was the establishment of the Office of Oversight and Evaluation in the Office of the Executive Director. Several delegations also supported the opening of UNFPA offices in different countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States since it was obvious that a UNFPA presence was needed in those countries in order to implement the Fund's assistance effectively. Some delegations asked more generally whether it might be possible to transfer even more functions to the field.

249. While acknowledging that the proposed support budget was, in fact, only a slight increase over the previous budget, several delegations asked whether there should be any increase in the budget at all or whether, given the expectation of resources, there should not be a decrease instead. One delegation stressed that its Government was looking for a zero-growth budget. In this regard, several delegations questioned the 7 per cent annual growth in income adopted in the Fund's work plan for 1998-2001, which had been approved by the Board at its annual session in 1997. One delegate stated that although the Board had approved that figure, it appeared to be less and less realistic; he therefore suggested that the Board should try to deal with the likely situation and not a hypothetical one. Another delegation said that perhaps the 2 to 3 per cent annual growth rate forecast by UNICEF was more realistic. The same delegation said that the greater predictability of income that had been requested by the Executive Director in her statement was perhaps not as important as was the ability to react quickly to changes in income levels. Another delegation said that his country would be willing to pay its contribution earlier in the year provided such early payment were also part of an overall strategy of all donors.

250. Several delegations agreed with the Executive Director that UNFPA needed to manage the implementation of the budget with a long-term view in mind but asked what contingency measures the Fund had in place to manage the income gap, should income fall short of the estimated levels. In that regard, however, several other delegations pointed out that a potential shortfall in income was not simply a problem of the Administration. The Executive Board needed to look at the UNFPA budget in the context of the overall mobilization of resources for population activities and to encourage countries to meet the obligations they had agreed upon at ICPD. In discussing those obligations, one delegation noted that the Executive Board had adopted many decisions on activities that it wanted the Fund to undertake. When the Fund came back to the Board with a budget that would enable it to carry out those activities, it was not enough for the Board to say that the necessary resources might be lacking. It was the Board's responsibility, therefore, to help UNFPA realize the income that it needed to carry out its work.

251. Delegations asked the Executive Director how realistic the Fund's income projections were vis-à-vis current donor pledges. One delegation pointed out that the dependence of UNFPA on a few major donors put the Fund in a very vulnerable position if one or more of these donors reduced their funding, which appeared to be the case. Given the uncertainty in funding, some delegations asked whether it was vital to staff the proposed new field offices immediately. One delegation asked what progress had been made on establishing a more predictable resource base.

252. One delegation pointed out that table 14 in the annex of the annual financial review, 1996 (DP/FPA/1997/13) was highly relevant to the budget discussion. It showed that trust-fund, or multi-bilateral, contributions to the Fund had increased over time. Several delegations expressed concern about that increase in multi-bilateral contributions. They stated that all contributions were welcome, but if non-core financing were to make up an ever larger percentage of the total, it could be seen as a threat to the principles of multilateralism. In discussing multi-bilateral funding, several delegations

said that they felt that the 5 per cent administrative cost charged by the Fund for administering such activities was too low.

253. One delegation asked for clarification on how far the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors had proceeded, since those recommendations had been made at the beginning of the year. The same delegation asked whether it would be possible to separate out expenditures for the Arab States from the total given for the Arab States region and Europe. The delegation further asked for clarification on the liquidity situation of the Fund, noting that the disbursement level seemed to be higher than the receipts. How was that managed?

254. Several delegations asked how the proposed budget would fit in with the Secretary-General's proposed reforms of the United Nations system. In particular, questions were asked as to how the proposed common premises for United Nations agencies might affect costs. One delegation pointed out that the Secretary-General's proposed Track II reforms had not yet been considered by the General Assembly; it was therefore premature to discuss them in the context of the current budget proposal. Thus, it was best to separate the Track II reform proposals from the UNFPA budget proposals.

255. Several delegations asked questions on specific issues. One asked for an explanation of why, in table 3 of document DP/FPA/1997/14, the programme support costs for country offices were given as $67.4 million, while in summary table I of the same document the costs were presented as $73.5 million. Several asked questions concerning the recommendation of ACABQ that support costs for the TSS system should be considered as part of the support budget rather than as programme costs, as was the current practice. One delegate asked for clarification on why some publications were included in project budgets and others were counted as part of the support budget. Another asked for more clarification and explanation about the $16.8 million mentioned by the administration as estimated savings for the period 1996-1997. The same delegation asked why the Executive Director had gone ahead with the Secretary-General's recommendation to upgrade one of the Deputy Executive Director positions to Assistant Secretary-General without consulting the Executive Board first.

256. In discussing the annual financial review, 1996 (DP/FPA/1997/13), one delegation noted that there had been a slight increase in the national execution of UNFPA programmes and thought that that was a good trend. Several delegations asked why expenditures in sub-Saharan Africa had decreased in spite of Executive Board decision 96/15. They asked if that result was chiefly a problem of absorptive capacity or a question of management on the part of UNFPA. One delegation said that if absorptive capacity in Africa was the problem, then perhaps it would have been wise to increase the UNFPA staffing in the region, especially of offices headed by resident UNFPA Representatives, even more than what had been proposed in the budget - only two of the new Representative posts were in Africa. Other delegations asked specific questions on other proposed offices: Why were UNFPA Representatives being proposed for Jordan and Turkey, even though neither was categorized as an 'A' country for UNFPA assistance? Where was the office in the Occupied Palestinian Territories going to be located? One delegation said that it subscribed to the view expressed in the

ACABQ report that administrative costs both in headquarters and the field had to be contained. The delegation accepted the rationale given in the budget for establishing the new offices; perhaps the same rationale should be applied to existing country offices. Those offices that could not be justified using the same criteria could perhaps be reduced in size or consolidated.

257. Concerning the report on the evaluation of staff training activities (DP/FPA/1997/11), one delegation said that it was left with the impression that staff training was looked upon more as a reward system than one that was designed to help the organization meet its needs. The delegation also said that the report did not convey a sense that the results achieved had matched the resources expended. Another delegation thought that the report could have been more analytical and asked what effect the decentralization of field operations would have on staff training activities. A third delegation asked how the ICPD Programme of Action had been reflected in training activities. Another regretted that the evaluation of staff training activities had not, under the format of the discussion, received the attention that it deserved; nonetheless, the report did make it clear that the staff were being trained to implement the Programme of Action of ICPD.

Response by the Administration

258. The Executive Director thanked the delegations for their supportive comments. On the question of whether the Fund's income projections were realistic or not, the Executive Director noted that she had looked back over the previous five work plans and had found that the resource projections in them had, in fact, been more or less on target. This was the first year in which the work plan figures seemed over-optimistic; even now, however, it was impossible to say whether there would be a shortfall or not. Two of the Fund's largest donors were making decisions at that moment on their official development assistance (ODA) for the coming year. One was debating its foreign assistance legislation that very day; the other had announced that there would be cuts in its overall ODA, but it was still not clear which agencies would be most affected. She could not say at that point whether the Fund would or would not realize its income objectives. She pointed out, however, that even if there were a significant shortfall, the proposed biennial support budget would still likely represent less than 18 per cent of total income, and there were very few United Nations agencies, or indeed non-governmental organizations, that were able to keep their administrative overhead so low. She assured delegations that she would keep the Board apprised of the Fund's income situation.

259. The Executive Director reminded delegations that discussion of the Fund's future income levels was directly tied to the question of resource mobilization for population and reproductive health programmes in general and that this issue would be discussed in greater depth at a future date in relation to document DP/FPA/1997/12, 'Meeting the Goals of the ICPD: Consequences of Resource Shortfalls up to the Year 2000'. She reiterated that the international community had made certain commitments at the Cairo Conference and that the UNFPA support budget was in large measure a reflection of what the Fund felt it would require to carry out its own responsibilities in implementing the ICPD Programme of Action within the timetable agreed upon in Cairo. She realized that the Fund had a relatively small resource base - 90 per cent of its income

came from donations from 14 donors - and that that put the Fund in a vulnerable situation. She therefore asked the Board what it could do to help ensure a more stable resource base for UNFPA. She also repeated what she had said in her opening statement, namely, that it would not be wise to let short-term variations in resource levels deter the Fund from carrying out its work. If the income did not materialize, UNFPA would, as she had said, have to make adjustments to its expenditure levels in order to take that into account, and she would, of course, keep the Board informed.

260. In discussing the financial situation at the end of 1996, she pointed out that it had clearly shown the need for an operational reserve at a level of 20 per cent of regular resource income. She reported that the reserve had been fully restored to its authorized amount at the beginning of 1997. So far in 1997, there was only a small amount of outstanding pledges for the year, but the Fund was, of course, trying to increase contributions for the year in order to meet its income estimates. She reiterated her request that donors pay as early in the year as possible. She also wished that it were possible to receive multi-year pledges from donors - at an increasing level, of course.

261. With regard to the question of the 5 per cent surcharge for administrative expenses for multi-bilateral funding, the Executive Director agreed that the amount was probably inadequate to reflect the true costs and, in that sense, regular resources were being used to some extent to subsidize multi-bilateral activities. The Fund was reviewing its own experience with such funding arrangements, as well as that of other similar agencies and organizations, with a view to arriving at a more equitable charge for administrative overheads. She agreed that it was not a good trend that multi-bilateral funding was increasing as a percentage of total income.

262. Concerning the question on the Fund's audit reports, the Executive Director said that the qualified audit opinion was a systemic problem for all United Nations agencies that had to get audited financial data on nationally executed projects from sovereign Governments; the problem, therefore, needed to be addressed by the United Nations system as a whole. Similarly, the decentralization of responsibilities to country offices required good accountability systems. Consequently, the Fund had revised its guidelines to be sure that such systems were in place and was revising its staff training programmes accordingly. Once the new guidelines had been implemented, the plan was to give full decentralized authority to all country offices headed by UNFPA Representatives.

263. The Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) reported that with respect to the qualified audit opinion he had had a meeting with the Board of Auditors to discuss their proposals for concrete action and that the Executive Director had taken steps to strengthen follow-up regarding audit requirements for nationally executed projects. He reiterated the importance of having the issue addressed system-wide. He reminded delegations that the Fund would submit a report to the Board at its first regular session in 1998 on the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors.

264. In addressing questions about the Secretary-General's reform proposals, the Executive Director pointed out that there were two types of reform - those

within the Secretary-General's prerogative (Track I) and those requiring the approval of the General Assembly (Track II). Track I reforms were already well under way. Track II reforms did indeed have to be acted on by the General Assembly before they could be put in force. However, many of the issues on common services that had been raised by delegations actually pre-dated the reform proposals. These and other related issues were being addressed in a number of subcommittees that had been established for this purpose. The subcommittees had not yet completed their work and therefore had not yet disseminated their findings and recommendations. For its part, UNFPA did not have large units to deal with administration, personnel and finance, but rather paid a subvention to UNDP for these services. She noted that the Fund already shared most of its premises with other agencies in the Joint Coordinating Group on Policy; therefore, there were not likely to be large additional savings in that area.

265. As for the current reforms and coordination among United Nations agencies, the Executive Director reported that the recently constituted United Nations Development Group (UNDG) should be able to help in harmonizing policy and practices at the country level, including such things as salaries, travel costs and the audit procedures referred to above.

266. The Director of the Division for Finance, Personnel and Administration answered the specific question about the difference in the amounts given for programme support costs for country offices in table 3 and summary table I in document DP/FPA/1997/14, noting that the figure provided in table 3 was a net figure, while the figure provided in summary table I was a gross figure, as had been agreed in the presentation of harmonized budgets for UNFPA, UNDP and UNICEF.

267. The Executive Director addressed the issue of the TSS posts by saying that they were clearly programme-related and should be included in programme budgets and not in the proposed biennial support budget. The posts were not permanent posts; they could be reconfigured or redefined. Such flexibility enabled the TSS system to adapt fairly quickly to the ever-changing needs for technical assistance. These issues had been extensively discussed by the Governing Council in 1991 when UNFPA first submitted its TSS proposal to the Council for its consideration and approval. The decision to fund the posts from programme budgets had thus benefited from extensive dialogue. The budgetary treatment was also in conformity with the decisions on the harmonization of the UNICEF, UNDP and UNFPA budgets.

268. In responding to questions about why certain publications were included in project budgets while others were included in the support budget, she said that that was largely a function of the nature of the publications themselves. On the one hand, the State of World Population report was, for example, considered to be a global-level advocacy activity. Its aim was to promote dialogue and exchange of information on wider issues of population and development. It therefore was given its own project budget. The publications included under the support budget, on the other hand, were in essence designed to promote greater awareness and understanding of the work of UNFPA per se. They were therefore included under the support budget. The Deputy Executive Director (Policy and

Administration) explained that the Governing Council had considered the issue in depth in 1991 and had accepted that rationale in its decision 91/36.

269. The Executive Director agreed with delegations that Africa was a priority for the Fund and said that the Fund was devoting considerable efforts to increasing expenditures in Africa. There had been some difficulties in staff recruitment for the African field offices, but those bottlenecks had been solved. She reported that 45.9 per cent of the Fund's field staff would be stationed in Africa in 1998-1999. She said that she trusted that the UNFPA study on absorptive capacity currently being carried out would help in increasing implementation rates in sub-Saharan African countries. She pointed out that many new programmes were starting up in Africa - they were genuinely new programmes designed to reflect post-ICPD thinking and that getting them off the ground required considerable effort.

270. The Executive Director said that she was pleased that national execution of UNFPA programmes was increasing and assured the Board that evaluation and monitoring of those programmes were being stepped up commensurate with the increased volume of activities. As for execution by NGOs remaining static, she said that the Fund greatly valued its links with both international and national NGOs, and the Board should look for the percentage of execution by those organizations to go up in the future.

271. In discussing the Fund's proposals for new support offices in the Commonwealth of Independent States, she reported that all of the offices that were being proposed would be staffed by national staff and housed in already existing UNDP offices, both of which would help in containing costs. She said that in the Commonwealth of Independent States and eastern Europe, programmes currently were being handled by the offices in Romania and Albania, which were overstretched and thus could not manage the increased activities in those countries. She said that since all of the countries involved were countries in transition, it was planned that it would eventually be possible to phase out the new field offices.

272. On the question of the Assistant Secretary-General post, the Executive Director said that the decision to reinstate that grade for the second Deputy Executive Director had been made by the Secretary-General, it having been the previous Secretary-General who had downgraded it. The difference in grade amounted to a cost of about $20,000 a year. The total of two Assistant Secretary-General posts at UNFPA was well within the normal and usual practice within the United Nations system.

273. In response to questions about staffing in the Arab States, the Executive Director reported that the Fund currently had 106 staff members working in the Arab States and Europe region, 87 of whom were based in Arab countries and 19 of whom were located in Europe. She said that as much as 99 per cent of the work of the CST located in Amman, Jordan, was devoted to work in the Arab States region. One reason for that was that much of the technical advisory services on reproductive health questions in European programme countries was provided by the WHO regional office in Copenhagen, Denmark.

274. As for the evaluation of staff training activities, the Executive Director said that she agreed with the comments that had been made by delegations but that the Board should be aware that the Fund was just now beginning to implement the recommendations in the report. She felt that the evaluation as such had not been as good as it could have been, even though she did agree with its recommendations. She would be reporting back to the Board as the recommendations were implemented. The Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) reported that several of the recommendations were already being implemented, such as the greater use of interactive media, the use of training-of-trainers techniques and the empowerment of field offices to carry out their own training initiatives as well as initiatives to give greater responsibility and involvement in training to managers and supervisors. He also reported that all of the training activities had built-in evaluation mechanisms.

275. Following the responses of the Administration, one delegation said that it felt that it had not received adequate replies on three questions: whether there would be proportionate cuts in administrative expenses if projected income levels were not realized; clarification on the $16.8 million referred to in the Executive Director's introductory remarks in reference to expenditures in 1996-1997; and why the promotion of the Deputy Executive Director to Assistant Secretary-General had not been presented to the Board for its consideration.

276. The President of the Executive Board said that he thought that the Executive Director had replied to the question about the Assistant Secretary-General post by saying that it was within the prerogative of the Secretary-General to make the determination. The Director of the Division of Finance, Personnel and Administration said that, as it had always done in the past, the Fund would take necessary measures to ensure that budget expenditures were in line with its income. She also said that the $16.8 million had been appropriately designated as 'savings', as this included such items as a reduction in rental costs at headquarters that had not been anticipated in the previous 1996-1997 budget. She referred the members of the Board to the supporting documentation that had been distributed earlier together with the Executive Director's statement. The supporting documentation contained additional details concerning the estimated savings of $16.8 million that had been realized in the 1996-1997 budget. She indicated that she would be available for further clarification, in addition to furnishing the supporting documentation, if needed.

277. The Executive Board took note of the report on the evaluation of UNFPA staff training activities (DP/FPA/1997/11) and requested the Executive Director to make an oral presentation to the Executive Board on the implementation of the recommendations of the evaluation at the second regular session 1998.

278. The Executive Board took note of the report on the UNFPA annual financial review, 1996 (DP/FPA/1997/13).

279. The Executive Board adopted the following decision on estimates for the support budget of the United Nations Population Fund for the biennium 1998-1999:

97/26. Estimates for the support budget of the United Nations Population Fund for the biennium 1998-1999

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the 1998-1999 biennial support budget estimates of the United Nations Population Fund, as contained in document DP/FPA/1997/14, as well as of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions thereon (DP/FPA/1997/15);

2. Urges the Executive Director to make every effort to contain both the administrative and the programme support costs at headquarters and in the field, as recommended by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions;

3. Also urges the Executive Director to keep under review the prevailing climate of uncertainty regarding future income, particularly by delaying the filling of the proposed new positions of UNFPA Representatives at an estimated cost of $1,635,044, when implementing the budget for the 1998-1999 biennium;

4. Welcomes the new format for the presentation of the budget in line with decision 97/6, item 5, on the harmonization of budget presentations;

5. Approves gross appropriations in the amount of $143,255,500 for the purposes indicated below and resolves that the income estimates of $15,707,000 shall be used to offset the gross appropriations, resulting in estimated net appropriations of $127,548,500;

1998-1999 biennial support budgets*
(Thousands of United States dollars)

Programme support:	
Country offices	73 484.2
Headquarters	26 811.5
Subtotal	100 295.7
Management and administration of the organization	42 959.7
Total gross appropriations	143 255.5
Less: Estimated income to the budget	15 707.0
Estimated net appropriations	127 548.5

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* As reflected in the table on 'UNFPA resource plan', dated 15 September 1997 and distributed on 17 September 1997 to the Executive Board.

6. Authorizes the Executive Director to redeploy resources between appropriation lines up to a maximum of 5 per cent of the appropriation to which the resources are redeployed;

7. Requests the Executive Director to report to the Executive Board at its third regular session 1998 on progress in implementing the support budget for the biennium 1998-1999, taking into account relevant developments until that time as well as foreseeable trends with regard, inter alia, to the income level for 1998 and the projections for 1999, the expected level of programme expenditure in 1998, as well as the United Nations reform process;

8. Also requests the Executive Director to present an oral report to the Executive Board at its second regular session 1998 on the criteria and mechanisms to be used for any readjustment to the biennial support budget for 1998-1999 in the event of any significant shortfall in income;

9. Recommends that the Executive Director undertake a study on multi-bilateral and trust fund arrangements and report to the Executive Board at the third regular session 1998, taking into account the ongoing study of the United Nations Development Programme on the same topic.

19 September 1997

280. Following the adoption of decision 97/26, two delegations requested that their comments on the decision be recorded. The German delegation said that it understood that paragraph 3 of decision 97/26 constituted a freeze of $1,635,044 and related posts for new UNFPA Representatives. The funds and posts would only be available if and when the income projections mentioned in the budget materialized. Furthermore, the delegation's understanding of paragraph 2 of the decision was that the recommendations of the ACABQ applied in all its elements, including the entire paragraph 23 of the ACABQ report. The German delegation deeply regretted the manner in which the Executive Board had conducted the budget decisions, inter alia, by using different yardsticks in handling the budgets of UNDP and UNFPA.

281. The delegation of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya said that in its view UNFPA did not take into account in its calculation the projected savings of $16.8 million. The delegation expected that the Executive Director, in her report at the second regular session in 1998, would disclose how the savings were treated in the calculation of the biennial support budget for 1998-1999.

VIII. UNFPA: RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

282. The President reported to the Board that, unfortunately, because of the crowded agenda, it would not be possible to devote the time that was warranted to the question of the mobilization of resources for population and reproductive health programmes. Rather than cut off debate, he proposed that detailed discussion of resource mobilization be put off until a later date, but he asked the Executive Director if she had any brief remarks that she would like to make. The Executive Director said that, at the request of the Board, the Fund had prepared a revised version of its previous paper on the consequences of resource

shortfalls - the new version had been presented to the Board at its present session in document DP/FPA/1997/12. The document differed from its predecessor chiefly in providing more detail on the methodology that had been used in developing its estimates and projections. However, the conclusions of both studies were the same: if the international community did not live up to the financial commitments that it had made at ICPD in Cairo in 1994, there would be serious repercussions for the reproductive health of people in developing countries and for efforts in stabilizing world population.

283. Several delegations asked for the floor after the Executive Director's statement. One delegation pointed out that the paper on resource shortfalls had implications that went far beyond the question of resource mobilization for UNFPA and hoped that it would be possible to disseminate it widely. That delegation was joined by two others in saying that the study should be a valuable contribution to the 'ICPD + 5' review process that would be taking place. One delegation stated that the phrase 'donor funds' as used in the report was inaccurate in that it included only donors' 'primary funds', i.e., funds specifically earmarked for population activities and did not include other contributions that donors made to development banks, multilateral organizations other than UNFPA and to other organizations. Another delegation said that it concurred that the report did not include all bilateral funding that went to related activities. Perhaps that made the situation seem more serious than it actually was. The same delegation asked to what extent the 20/20 initiative would help to mobilize resources.

284. The Executive Director said that the report would be given wider dissemination once the Executive Board had had a chance to consider it in depth and that it, or a similar study, would be used in the 'ICPD + 5' review process. She said that the Fund would continue to update the data that were used in the report as well as to improve the quality of the data used, and she appreciated any assistance that Governments could provide in that regard. The Executive Director said that it was not entirely clear to what extent the 20/20 initiative would benefit population and reproductive health programmes; it seemed to be covering more and more kinds of activities.

285. The Executive Board decided to continue consideration of item 8 on UNFPA resource mobilization at its second regular session 1998.

IX. UNFPA: COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS

286. In its approval of the revised work plan for the present session, the Executive Board decided to postpone consideration of the six country programmes included in item IX of the provisional agenda, UNFPA country programmes and related matters, until the first regular session 1998.

X. OTHER MATTERS

Field visits

287. The Executive Board agreed to postpone discussion of Board members' field visits to Jamaica, the Turks and Caicos Islands and Cuba (DP/1997/CRP.24) and to Kyrgyzstan and Latvia (DP/1997/CRP.26) to an informal meeting on 9 October 1997.

Assistance to the Democratic Republic of the Congo

288. The Acting Director of the Regional Bureau for Africa presented an oral report on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as requested by the Executive Board in its decision 97/19. He expressed the hope that the implementation of the human rights mission to Kinshasa would commence in the near future. There had been an absence of agreement on the work of the mission. Several States had also fielded missions to the country. Preparations for a 'Friends of Congo' meeting were also under way. It was hoped that these activities would send the message that the United Nations system remained engaged in the country during the early stages of the new Government. Discussions had taken place on the Government's long-term vision for the country and on a proposed reconstruction strategy, including demobilization.

289. UNDP had launched a mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which had identified three areas in which contributions could be made to building the capacities of the new Government: (a) reversal of the country's brain-drain through the return of expatriate nationals; (b) policy analysis and coordination; and (c) aid coordination. The Secretary-General had appointed the Administrator as convenor of a task force on reconciliation, reconstruction and regional stability, which would plan the presence of United Nations organizations to work in the country within the framework for post-conflict reconstruction.

290. The Executive Board took note of the oral report on the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Reserve for Field Accommodation

291. The Administrator delivered an oral progress report to the Executive Board on the Reserve for Field Accommodation (RFA). He stated that the external investigation, which related principally to the activities of contractors and subcontractors, was proceeding well. The United Nations Office of Internal Oversight Services was assisting the UNDP Office of Audit and Performance Review with the ongoing external investigation. Investigators had visited RFA construction projects in a number of countries and numerous individuals had been interviewed. The Administrator explained that he was not in a position to provide details that could hinder the investigations or prejudice the results. He was convinced that the outcome would contribute to a strong message of accountability to all concerned.

292. Summarizing the contents of his letter of 6 June 1997 to Executive Board members, the Administrator provided information on actions taken and developments with respect to the personal responsibility and accountability of

UNDP staff. He also reviewed the information contained in that letter with regard to strengthening financial management in UNDP. In that regard, the Bureau for Finance and Administrative Services had launched a complete review of UNDP financial regulations and rules. New policy concepts based on lessons learned and changes in the management culture of UNDP towards delegation and decentralization of authority were being developed. Accountability tools and processes, including control self-assessment exercises, were being developed, in line with practices sponsored by many Governments. The Office of Human Resources was designing a framework on ethics that would clarify expectations and guidelines for financial control, project management and contract administration functions. More attention would be given to finance and management oversight in future training activities.

293. The Executive Board took note of the oral report of the Administrator on the Reserve for Field Accommodation.

Global Mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and/or Drought in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa

294. The Assistant Administrator and Director, Bureau for Development Policy, gave an oral report on developments concerning the Global Mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and/or Drought in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa. A decision on the arrangements for hosting the Global Mechanism would take place during the first Conference of the Parties to the Convention, which would be held from 29 September to 10 October 1997, in Rome, Italy. The Executive Board had been briefed in 1995 and 1996 on the issue of the availability of UNDP to host the Global Mechanism. There had been a number of developments since the previous briefings.

295. The Administrator had outlined the capacities of UNDP that would make it a suitable host for the Global Mechanism at the eighth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for the Elaboration of an International Convention to Combat Desertification and/or Drought in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, in Geneva, Switzerland, in February 1996. At that time, the Administrator had put forward the idea of co-hosting the Mechanism with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). At the tenth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee, held in New York, in January 1997, UNDP and IFAD were requested to submit updated versions of their proposals for hosting the Global Mechanism by 1 May 1997. The Assistant Administrator informed the Board that much progress had been made on the functions and terms of reference of the Global Mechanism, and that the text would be finalized during the meeting of the Conference of Parties in Rome. At the June 1997 Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly the President of the World Bank offered to assist in the implementation of the Convention, in partnership with others, and in establishing mechanisms for mobilizing financing and coordinating implementation, an offer that was reiterated at the resumed tenth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee, held in Geneva, Switzerland, from 18 to 22 August 1997.

296. UNDP, IFAD and the World Bank met on 18 and 19 September 1997, in Rome, Italy, to consult on and develop a proposal for a possible collaborative institutional arrangement for the Global Mechanism, for submission to, consideration and appropriate action by the Conference of Parties. The three organizations have so far maintained the position that the basic operational costs of the Global Mechanism should be borne by the budget of the Conference of Parties, with supplemental support from the organizations themselves.

297. The Executive Board would be consulted, as appropriate, after a decision was reached by the Conference of Parties regarding the administrative and operational modalities for hosting the Global Mechanism, if UNDP were selected to assume such a responsibility.

Terms of reference of the WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health

298. The President introduced the discussion of the terms of reference of the WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health (CCH) (DP/FPA/1997/17) by informing the Board that he had received a letter from the Executive Director of UNICEF that had apprised him of a recent decision of the UNICEF Executive Board. In its decision 1997/27, the UNICEF Executive Board had taken note of the terms of reference for the CCH that had been adopted by the WHO Executive Board in May 1997 and had proposed some amendments to them. The President asked that copies of the UNICEF Executive Director's letter and the attached decision be distributed to the Board and asked the UNFPA Executive Director if she had any comments. The Executive Director said that her main concern was that the new Coordinating Committee begin its work as soon as possible. She was disappointed that to date the efforts to enhance cooperation and collaboration among United Nations agencies in the health field by convening the new Committee and having it begin its work had not been realized.

299. Several delegations agreed with the Executive Director that the important thing was to facilitate the work of the new Committee, which had already been constituted by the Executive Boards of the three agencies concerned. One delegation said that it had participated in the discussion of the proposed terms of reference at the UNICEF Executive Board and felt that the amended terms of reference as approved by that body were more balanced, the previous version having focused too much on reproductive health. Several other delegations concurred with that view. Some delegations, however, thought that the terms of reference as approved by the WHO Executive Board, which had been presented to the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board in document DP/FPA/1997/17, were preferable. Several delegations then stated that the best course would be to convene a meeting of the Committee as soon as possible and have it discuss the terms of reference and refer an agreed-upon version back to the three Executive Boards. Otherwise, various draft terms of reference might be sent back and forth between the three Boards for a considerable time and the actual work of the Committee might be delayed indefinitely. One delegation asked why the new body had dropped the name of its predecessor - the Joint Committee on Health Policy.

300. The Executive Director responded that the name change had resulted from the understanding that it was within the mandate of WHO to set health policy for the entire United Nations system. She said that she disagreed that the draft terms of reference as presented to the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board had focused too much

on reproductive health; nevertheless, the crucial thing was for the Committee to meet and begin its work, not just on procedural questions such as the terms of reference, but on substantive issues as well.

301. The Executive Board approved the following decision:

97/28. Functioning of the Coordinating Committee on Health

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the proposed draft terms of reference of the WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health as contained in document DP/FPA/1997/17;

2. Recommends that the WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health meet as soon as possible to discuss its functioning, including proposed amendments to its terms of reference, taking fully into account the core programme areas of the United Nations Population Fund, as well as substantive issues common to the mandates of the World Health Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Population Fund;

3. Calls upon the secretariats of the World Health Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Population Fund to facilitate the convening of such a meeting;

4. Recommends that any agreed amendments made to the proposed draft terms of reference be submitted to the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and of the United Nations Population Fund for its consideration;

5. Requests the President of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and of the United Nations Population Fund to convey the present decision to the President of the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund and the Chairman of the Executive Board of the World Health Organization.

19 September 1997

Recommendations of the UNFPA Advisory Committee on NGOs

302. The President invited Ms. Monique Essed-Fernandes from the Stichting Projekta in Suriname and a member of the UNFPA Advisory Committee on NGOs to report to the Executive Board on the Advisory Committee's most recent meeting. The representative of the Committee thanked the President and the Executive Director for their help in facilitating her participation in the Executive Board meeting. Although this was the first time that a representative of the Advisory Committee had made such a report, she hoped that the procedure would be regularized in the future.

303. Ms. Essed-Fernandes informed the Board that the Advisory Committee had been formed following the ICPD in 1994 in order to help to forge collaborative

partnerships among UNFPA and national and international NGOs in implementing the ICPD Programme of Action. The Advisory Committee had recently held its third meeting in June. At that time it had adopted recommendations in three priority areas: (a) establishment of structured mechanisms for collaboration with NGOs; (b) consolidation of NGO collaboration through resource allocation; and (c) ways to strengthen NGO cooperation in such priority thematic areas as advocacy.

304. Since the full report of the Committee's recent meeting had been made available to the Board, Ms. Essed-Fernandes said that she would focus in her statement on three specific recommendations that fell within the context of structuring working relations with NGOs and which were relevant to the work of the Executive Board. The first of those recommendations was that input from the NGO Advisory Committee to the Executive Board should be regularized. She said that precedents for structured participation of NGOs already existed within the United Nations system. Structures for such participation should thus be institutionalized. The second recommendation was that the Fund should do a more detailed accounting of the allocation of its resources to NGOs as a way of planning more effectively for the role that NGOs could play in the effort to reach ICPD goals within the set period. The final recommendation was that there should be investment in long-term capacity-building and basic organizational development of partner NGOs. She concluded by requesting that the Advisory Committee stay in consultation with the Secretariat on the development of a structured relationship with the Executive Board. The President thanked the representative for her statement and said that he had been invited to meet with the NGO Advisory Committee in June and had found its work to be very valuable.

Conclusion of the session

305. On behalf of the Executive Director of UNFPA, the Deputy Executive Director (Policy and Administration) thanked the Executive Board for all the work it had done on UNFPA matters during 1997. He also thanked the Bureau and the two Secretariats.

306. The Administrator said the session had been productive and effective. He looked forward to the informal discussion on the ideas proposed for a UNDP funding strategy as well as to taking up the subject of non-core resources at the first regular session 1998. He thanked the Executive Board for its confidence and trust in building a new UNDP, stating that their comments, observations and suggestions would be taken into account in implementation of the decision on the budget (97/24). He would proceed with the request of the Board to seek an additional Assistant Secretary-General post for the Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States from the Secretary-General, including through an amendment to the 1998-1999 budget, as appropriate. He noted that the letter and spirit of existing legislation had been met with current arrangements, since the directors of all regional bureaux served as Assistant Administrators of UNDP. Of the seven Assistant Secretary-General positions that UNDP had once had instead of the present six, one had been relinquished at an earlier stage of United Nations reform. He reiterated that he had often expressed personal reservations regarding raising the matter at the present time.

307. The Executive Board had a critical role to play in applying a substantive and systematic approach to reviewing the country cooperation frameworks, the Administrator stated. He thanked the Board for reviewing the large number of frameworks at the present session and for examining them so diligently and carefully in the time available. He underlined that UNDP would give top priority to the key issues of benchmarks, monitoring and evaluation as it assisted countries in their implementation of the frameworks.

308. The Administrator announced that UNDP was planning a number of activities to commemorate the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, 17 October 1997, in all regions of the world, with the theme 'A World Without Poverty'. A special event would be held in New York, with the aim of calling attention to the plight of 1.3 billion people living in abject poverty and to honour four individuals for their outstanding contributions to poverty eradication. UNDP country offices would organize local activities.

309. The outgoing Executive Board members of Burundi, Cuba, Ethiopia, Finland, Gambia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Slovakia, Sweden and Switzerland were recognized and thanked for their contribution. The Administrator also welcomed Botswana, Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Ghana, Ireland, Jamaica, Lebanon, the Republic of Korea, South Africa, Spain, and the United Republic of Tanzania, who would join the Board in January 1998. He thanked Mr. Vic Heard of the United Kingdom and Mr. Rudolf Fetzer of Germany, delegates who would be moving to new posts before the next session, and wished them luck in their new assignments. He then thanked the Bureau, in particular the President, Mr. Hans Lundborg, for its work throughout 1997 and contribution to the governance of UNDP.

310. The Administrator announced the appointments of two senior officials in UNDP: Ms. Thelma Awori, as Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Africa, and Mr. Fawaz Fokaladeh, as Assistant Administrator and Director of the Regional Bureau for Arab States. Many delegations took the floor to congratulate the two appointees.

311. Before the President closed the session, thanking the two Secretariats and the Bureau, the Executive Board adopted the following decision:

97/29. Overview of decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its third regular session 1997

The Executive Board

Recalls that during the third regular session 1997 it:

ITEM 1: ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Approved the agenda and work plan for its third regular session 1997 (DP/1996/L.4/Rev.1);

Approved the report of the annual session 1997 (DP/1997/21);

Took note of the proposed annual work plan 1998 for UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board with the comments made thereon;

Approved the following schedule of future sessions of the Executive Board subject to the approval of the Committee on Conferences:

First regular session 1998:	19-23 January 1998
Second regular session 1998:	20-24 April 1998
Annual session 1998:	8-19 June 1998
Third regular session 1998:	14-18 September 1998

Agreed to the subjects to be discussed at the first regular session 1998 of the Board, as listed in the annex to the present decision;

Requested that a one-day joint session with UNICEF be held in January 1998 to enable an exchange of views on the impact of overall United Nations reform on the Funds and Programmes;

UNDP SEGMENT

ITEM 2: UNDP CHANGE MANAGEMENT

Took note of the report on the UNDP change management updated implementation plan (dec. 97/15) (DP/1997/CRP.22);

ITEM 3: FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Adopted decision 97/24 of 19 September 1997 on budget estimates for the biennium 1998-1999 (DP/1997/23);

Took note of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the UNDP budget estimates for the biennium 1998-1999 (DP/1997/31);

Took note of the report on the annual review of financial situation 1996 (DP/1997/24);

Took note of the detailed information relating to the 1996 annual review of the financial situation (DP/1997/24/Add.1);

Took note of the report on the status of management services agreement (DP/1997/24/Add.2) and recommended that the Administrator continue the management service agreement modality;

Took note of the report on subcontracts awarded and major equipment ordered (DP/1997/25*);

Took note of the reports on United Nations system technical cooperation expenditures, 1996 (DP/1997/30 and DP/1997/30/Add.1);

ITEM 4: UNDP: RESOURCES AND FUNDING STRATEGY

Decided to continue consideration of item 4 on UNDP resources and funding strategy at its first regular session 1998;

ITEM 5: UNOPS: FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Adopted decision 97/21 of 18 September 1997 on United Nations Office for Project Services risk management, reserves and surplus income (DP/1997/26);

Adopted decision 97/22 of 18 September 1997 on the United Nations Office for Project Services revised budget estimates for the biennium 1996-1997 and budget estimates for the biennium 1998-1999 (DP/1997/29);

Adopted decision 97/23 of 18 September 1997 on follow-up to recommendations of the report of the Board of Auditors on the United Nations Office for Project Services (A/51/5/Add.10) (DP/1997/27);

Took note of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the United Nations Office for Project Services (DP/1997/28);

ITEM 6: UNDP: COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS

Approved the following country cooperation frameworks:

I

First country cooperation framework for Angola (DP/CCF/ANG/1);
First country cooperation framework for Benin (DP/CCF/BEN/1);
First country cooperation framework for Botswana (DP/CCF/BOT/1);
First country cooperation framework for Burkina Faso (DP/CCF/BKF/1);
First country cooperation framework for Cameroon (DP/CCF/CMR/1);
First country cooperation framework for Chad (DP/CCF/CHD/1);
First country cooperation framework for Gabon (DP/CCF/GAB/1);
First country cooperation framework for Guinea-Bissau (DP/CCF/GBS/1);
First country cooperation framework for Malawi (DP/CCF/MLW/1);
First country cooperation framework for Mauritius (DP/CCF/MAR/1);
First country cooperation framework for Sao Tome and Principe (DP/CCF/STP/1);
First country cooperation framework for Senegal (DP/CCF/SEN/1);
First country cooperation framework for Seychelles (DP/CCF/SEY/1);
First country cooperation framework for South Africa (DP/CCF/SAF/1);
First country cooperation framework for Swaziland (DP/CCF/SWA/1);
First country cooperation framework for Zimbabwe (DP/CCF/ZIM/1);

II

First country cooperation framework for Cambodia (DP/CCF/CMB/1);
First country cooperation framework for Fiji (DP/CCF/FIJ/1);

First country cooperation framework for the Federated States of Micronesia (DP/CCF/FSM/1);
First country cooperation framework for Kiribati (DP/CCF/KIR/1);
First country cooperation framework for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DP/CCF/DRK/1);
First country cooperation framework for Malaysia (DP/CCF/MAL/1);
First country cooperation framework for Maldives (DP/CCF/MDV/1);
First country cooperation framework for the Marshall Islands (DP/CCF/MAS/1);
First country cooperation framework for Nepal (DP/CCF/NEP/1);
First country cooperation framework for Niue (DP/CCF/NIU/1);
First country cooperation framework for Pakistan (DP/CCF/PAK/1);
First country cooperation framework for Palau (DP/CCF/PAU/1);
First country cooperation framework for the Philippines (DP/CCF/PHI/1);
First country cooperation framework for Samoa (DP/CCF/SAM/1);
First country cooperation framework for the Solomon Islands (DP/CCF/SOI/1);
First country cooperation framework for Sri Lanka (DP/CCF/SRL/1);
First country cooperation framework for Thailand (DP/CCF/THA/1);
First country cooperation framework for Tonga (DP/CCF/TON/1);
First country cooperation framework for Tuvalu (DP/CCF/TUV/1);
First country cooperation framework for Vanuatu (DP/CCF/VAN/1);

III

First country cooperation framework for Armenia (DP/CCF/ARM/1*);
First country cooperation framework for Azerbaijan (DP/CCF/AZE/1);
First country cooperation framework for Bulgaria (DP/CCF/BUL/1);
First country cooperation framework for Georgia (DP/CCF/GEO/1);
First country cooperation framework for Malta (DP/CCF/MAT/1);
First country cooperation framework for the Russian Federation (DP/CCF/RUS/1);
First country cooperation framework for Saint Helena (DP/CCF/STH/1);
First country cooperation framework for Slovenia (DP/CCF/SVN/1);
First country cooperation framework for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (DP/CCF/MCD/1);
First country cooperation framework for Turkmenistan (DP/CCF/TUK/1);
First country cooperation framework for Ukraine (DP/CCF/UKR/1);

IV

First country cooperation framework for Anguilla (DP/CCF/ANL/1);
First country cooperation framework for Argentina (DP/CCF/ARG/1);
First country cooperation framework for Barbados (DP/CCF/BAR/1);
First country cooperation framework for the British Virgin Islands (DP/CCF/BVI/1);
First country cooperation framework for Brazil (DP/CCF/BRA/1);
First country cooperation framework for Chile (DP/CCF/CHI/1);
First country cooperation framework for Cuba (DP/CCF/CUB/1);
First country cooperation framework for Dominica (DP/CCF/DMI/1);
First country cooperation framework for the Dominican Republic (DP/CCF/DOM/1);
First country cooperation framework for El Salvador (DP/CCF/ELS/1);

First country cooperation framework for Grenada (DP/CCF/GRN/1);
First country cooperation framework for Guyana (DP/CCF/GUY/1);
First country cooperation framework for Honduras (DP/CCF/HON/1);
First country cooperation framework for Jamaica (DP/CCF/JAM/1);
First country cooperation framework for Mexico (DP/CCF/MEX/1);
First country cooperation framework for Peru (DP/CCF/PER/1);
First country cooperation framework for Saint Lucia (DP/CCF/STL/1);
First country cooperation framework for Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (DP/CCF/STV/1);
First country cooperation framework for Trinidad and Tobago (DP/CCF/TRI/1);
First country cooperation framework for Uruguay (DP/CCF/URU/1);
First country cooperation framework for Venezuela (DP/CCF/VEN/1);

V

First country cooperation framework for Djibouti (DP/CCF/DJI/1);
First country cooperation framework for Egypt (DP/CCF/EGY/1);
First country cooperation framework for Jordan (DP/CCF/JOR/1);
First country cooperation framework for Kuwait (DP/CCF/KUW/1);
First country cooperation framework for Saudi Arabia (DP/CCF/SAU/1);
First country cooperation framework for the Sudan (DP/CCF/SUD/1);
First country cooperation framework for the Syrian Arab Republic (DP/CCF/SYR/1);
First country cooperation framework for the United Arab Emirates (DP/CCF/UAE/1);
First country cooperation framework for Yemen (DP/CCF/YEM/1)

Agreed to postpone consideration of the first country cooperation framework for the Republic of Congo (DP/CCF/PRC/1), the first country cooperation framework for Montserrat (DP/CCF/MOT/1) and the first country cooperation for Yugoslavia (DP/1997/YUG/1);

Adopted decision 97/25 of 19 September 1997 on the first country cooperation framework for Nigeria (DP/CCF/NIR/1);

Took note of the extension of the following country programmes:

Extension of the fourth country programme for Albania (DP/CP/ALB/4/EXTENSION I);
Extension of the third country programme for Antigua and Barbuda (DP/CP/ANT/3/EXTENSION I);
Extension of the third country programme for the Cayman Islands (DP/CP/CAY/3/EXTENSION I);
Extension of the fifth country programme for Costa Rica (DP/CP/COS/5/EXTENSION I);
Extension of the fifth country programme for Paraguay (DP/CP/PAR/5/EXTENSION I);
Extension of the third country programme for Saint Kitts and Nevis (DP/CP/STK/3/EXTENSION I);
Extension of the third country programme for Turks and Caicos (DP/CP/TCI/3/EXTENSION I);
Extension of the fifth country programme for the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya (DP/CP/LIB/5/EXTENSION I);

Approved the regional cooperation framework for the Arab States (DP/RCF/RBAS/1);

Approved the revised global cooperation framework (97/5) (DP/GCF/1/Rev.1);

UNFPA SEGMENT

ITEM 7: UNFPA: FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Adopted decision 97/26 of 19 September 1997 on UNFPA estimates for the biennial support budget for 1998-1999 (DP/FPA/1997/14);

Took note of the report on evaluation of UNFPA staff training activities (DP/FPA/1997/11) and requested the Executive Director to make an oral presentation to the Executive Board on the implementation of the recommendations of the evaluation at the second regular session 1998;

Took note of the report on UNFPA annual financial review 1996 (DP/FPA/1997/13);

Adopted decision 97/27 of 19 September 1997 on the UNFPA technical support services system (DP/FPA/1997/16);

ITEM 8: UNFPA: RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

Decided to continue consideration of item 8 on UNFPA resource mobilization at its second regular session 1998;

ITEM 9: UNFPA: COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS

Decided to defer consideration of the UNFPA country programmes originally scheduled for the third regular session 1997 (Algeria, China, Egypt, Nicaragua, Paraguay and the Pacific subregion) to the first regular session 1998;

ITEM 10: OTHER MATTERS

Adopted decision 97/28 of 19 September 1997 on the terms of reference of the WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health (DP/FPA/1997/17);

Confirmed the nominations of its representatives to the Coordinating Committee on Health;

Took note of the oral report on the activities undertaken in the Democratic Republic of the Congo;

Took note of the recommendations of UNFPA Advisory Committee on NGOs;

Took note of the oral report of the Administrator on the UNDP Reserve for Field Accommodation;

Took note of the oral presentation of the Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, on the first session of the Conference of Parties of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and/or Drought in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa;

Decided to take up consideration of the mission reports of field visits to Cuba and Jamaica in 1997 (DP/1997/CRP.24) and to Kyrgyzstan and Latvia in 1997 (DP/1997/CRP.26) at an informal session of the Board to be held later in 1997;

19 September 1997

Annex

TENTATIVE WORK PLAN
EXECUTIVE BOARD OF UNDP/UNFPA
First regular session 1998
(19-23 January 1998 - 5 working days)

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time allotted	Item and subject
1				ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
	Official (DP/1998/L.1)	A	((	Provisional agenda, annotations, list of documents
	Official	A	½ day(	Report on the third regular session 1997
	Official	I	(	Decisions adopted by the Executive Board in 1997
			((	Annual work plan 1998 for UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board
				UNFPA/UNDP SEGMENT
2	Official	A/I	(((	Updated overview of implementation of recommendations of the Board of Auditors (97/2 & 97/3)
			1 day (	UNFPA SEGMENT
3	Official	A	(	UNFPA: COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS
				UNDP SEGMENT
			(	UNDP 2001:
4	Oral	I	½ day (	Follow up to 97/15 - Progress report
	Official	A	(	Narrowing the focus
5			((	COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS
			(	Country cooperation frameworks
	Official	A	(1½ days((	Implementation strategy papers for RCFs (including timetable for mid-term review and proposed methodology) (97/9)
			(	Assistance to Myanmar (96/1)
6				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	Official	A	((1½ days((	Review of modalities of non-core resources (96/44) including follow-up to 97/15 para. 23 (guidelines on national execution and role of UNDP in implementation)

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time allotted	Item and subject
	CRP	A/I	(((	UNDP resources and funding strategy options: 'Towards a sustainable funding strategy for UNDP'
	CRP	I	(	Review of round-table process
7				OTHER MATTERS

NOTE: A one-day joint session with UNICEF will be held in January 1998 to enable an exchange of views on the impact of overall United Nations reform on the Funds and Programmes.

Abbreviations: A = action; CRP = conference room paper; I = information; and RCFs = regional cooperation frameworks.

Annex I

DECISIONS ADOPTED BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD DURING 1997

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97/1. UNICEF/WHO/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the note of the President on coordination in health policy and programming: follow-up to Executive Board decision 96/38 (DP/FPA/1997/5);

2. Endorses the proposed arrangements contained in document DP/FPA/1997/5 as follows:

(a) That the present UNICEF/WHO Joint Committee on Health Policy be known as the UNICEF/WHO/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health;

(b) That the terms of reference of the UNICEF/WHO/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health be amended accordingly, in consultation with the secretariats of the three organizations;

(c) That the agenda of the meeting of the UNICEF/WHO/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health be organized in such a way that matters of greatest relevance to the United Nations Population Fund are clustered together;

3. Recommends that the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Population Fund become a member of the UNICEF/WHO/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health;

4. Requests the President of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and of the United Nations Population Fund, with the assistance of the secretariat of the United Nations Population Fund, to bring the present decision to the attention of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Health Organization;

5. Requests the secretariat of the Executive Board to circulate, as soon as they are available, the amended terms of reference of the UNICEF/WHO/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health.

16 January 1997

97/2. UNFPA: Audit reports

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the comments made by the United Nations Population Fund in document DP/FPA/1997/4 in response to the recommendations made in the report of the United Nations Board of Auditors for the biennium 1994-1995 (A/51/5/Add.7);

2. Requests the secretariat to provide the Executive Board, at its first regular session 1998, with an updated overview of the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors and an updated timetable indicating the dates when follow-up action will have been completed in the areas that need to

be addressed, namely, trust funds, national execution, technical support services arrangements, management of interregional projects and the selection and use of consultants;

3. Requests the secretariat to provide an update on the progress achieved in the implementation of the recommendations of the auditors at the first regular session of the Executive Board each year, as a matter of routine, under the agenda item "Financial, budgetary and administrative matters".

16 January 1997

97/3. UNDP: Audit reports

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the comments made by the United Nations Development Programme in document DP/1997/3 in response to the recommendations made in the report of the United Nations Board of Auditors for the biennium 1994-1995 (A/51/5/Add.1);

2. Requests the secretariat to provide the Executive Board, at its first regular session 1998, with an updated overview of the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors and an updated timetable indicating the dates when follow-up action will have been completed in the areas that need to be addressed, namely, audit of projects, reserve for field accommodations, national execution, budgetary matters, management of funds, such as the United Nations Capital Development Fund and the United Nations Development Fund for Women, and internal audit;

3. Requests the secretariat to provide an update on the progress achieved in the implementation of the recommendations of the auditors at the first regular session of the Executive Board each year, as a matter of routine, under the agenda item "Financial, budgetary and administrative matters".

16 January 1997

97/4. United Nations Development Fund for Women

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the conference room paper on the applicability of a partial funding system to the United Nations Development Fund for Women (DP/1997/CRP.5), submitted in response to Executive Board decision 96/43;

2. Endorses the methodology for determining project approval and operational reserve levels for the United Nations Development Fund for Women under the partial funding modality, as set out in the annex to the present decision, and approves, on a provisional basis, its use for the Fund, beginning in 1997, and its continuation on a no-objection basis, pending the discussion of the response to the evaluation of the Fund;

3. Decides that an appropriate monitoring mechanism should be established by the United Nations Development Fund for Women in consultation with the United Nations Development Programme and that the Fund should report on the functioning of the partial funding modality in the annual financial report of the United Nations Development Programme and its administered funds, to be presented during each third regular session;

4. Takes note of the response provided by the United Nations Development Fund for Women to the recommendations of the Fund's external evaluation, as reflected in the informal note provided by the Fund during the current session and decides that the paper should be distributed in the working languages of the Executive Board for discussion at the second regular session 1997, bearing in mind paragraph 3 of Board decision 96/8 regarding the rules for the submission of documentation;

5. Also takes note of the progress being made by the United Nations Development Fund for Women in developing a strategy and business plan, as reflected in the oral report of the Executive Director to the Board;

6. Takes further note of the recent finding that the United Nations Development Fund for Women may work in Eastern Europe, Central Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, within the existing legislation, and requests the Fund to take into consideration the finding in the context of its business plan and strategy to be presented to the annual session 1997 of the Board, bearing in mind that due consideration should be given to activities in the least developed countries and low-income countries, particularly in Africa, as expressed in Executive Board decision 96/43.

17 January 1997

Annex

PARTIAL FUNDING SYSTEM

1. UNIFEM shall adopt a modified partial funding modality to determine its programme approval levels and associated operational reserve balance. The following variables are included in the formulae to determine programme approval and operational reserve levels:

(a) Estimated income to general resources, calculated on the basis of the pledging conference results and direct consultation with donors (I);

(b) Balance of general resources carried over from the previous year (B);

(c) Administrative budget. The estimate of the next three years will be by default equal to three times the current year. UNIFEM management will submit any adjustments from that estimate to UNDP for approval (AB);

(d) Budgets of ongoing projects rephased from previous years into the present year, plus budgets of ongoing projects for the year in question (OPB);

(e) Delivery rate, i.e., estimated proportion of current year approved budgets actually disbursed during the year (D).

2. The maximum approval level (AL) for programming over a three-year period shall be set in December of each year, using a conservative estimate of income realization for the next three years, minus administrative costs for that same period. A very conservative estimate of income to be realized for the first year would be equal to the estimated income for that year, calculated on the basis of the pledging conference results and direct consultation with donors. The estimate for the second year would be equal to 50 per cent of the estimated income of the first year while the estimate for the third year would be equal to 25 per cent of the estimated income of the first year (i.e., 50 per cent of the estimate for the previous year).

$$AL = (1+0.5+0.25) \times I-AB$$

If the income stream becomes more diverse and hence less dependent on a small group of donors, the amount of resources in future years that could be programmed may be increased from the present coefficients for the second and third years. The present levels represent a very conservative approach, consistent with the existing characteristics of the donor base. As conditions change, UNIFEM management, in consultation with the Division of Finance, may reconsider the income estimates to be used, and present them to the Executive Board for consideration.

3. The amount available for total new approvals over the programme period is obtained by subtracting the total value of the budgets of ongoing projects for present and future years from the maximum approval level. The operational reserve (OR) would be set at the annual average expenditure over the programming period, i.e., one third of the maximum programme approval level times the estimated delivery rate.

$$OR = AL/3 \times D$$

4. The programme expenditure ceiling (EC) for the current year shall be set so as not to exceed the total estimated resources available for that year (balance of general resources brought forward from the previous year plus estimated income), minus administrative costs. As the operational reserve level fluctuates with changes in the approval levels, any additions or reductions to the reserve must also be taken into account in determining the programme expenditure ceiling. This ceiling shall therefore be calculated as:

$$EC = B + I - AB \text{ +/- changes to the OR}$$

The annual ceiling for new project budget approvals (AC) in the present year is set on the basis of this expenditure ceiling by:

(a) Subtracting the budgets of ongoing projects for the current year, including amounts rephased from the previous year (OPB); and

(b) Taking into account the estimated delivery rate of UNIFEM (80 per cent) and consequently adjusting the project budget approval ceiling upwards to allow as much programming as possible, without exceeding available resources.

$$AC = (1/D \times EC) - OPB$$

5. As stated above, the UNIFEM operational reserve will serve two main purposes: (a) to cover any short-term shortfalls between expenditures and liquidity from month to month and (b) to provide a hedge against downward income fluctuations from year to year. The following procedure shall be adopted. UNIFEM shall monitor the operational reserve and report on it quarterly to the Office of the Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Finance and Administration. If it appears that the level of the reserve cannot be maintained at the close of the year, the Administrator shall inform the Executive Board, stating the reasons justifying the use of the reserve and the steps that UNIFEM intends to take to address the problem. The functioning of the partial funding system, including the operational reserve level, will be the subject of a management review by UNIFEM and the Division of Finance every December. The appropriate levels for the coming years will be determined at that time.

97/5. First global cooperation framework

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the revised draft of the first global cooperation framework as contained in document DP/GCF/1, as well as the statements of the Administrator and the Assistant Administrator on the revised draft;

2. Recalls its decision 96/42;

3. Requests the Administrator, taking into account the comments made by members of the Executive Board at the current session, to elaborate further the first global cooperation framework draft, through early consultation with the Board, and to produce for the third regular session 1997 a revised proposal for consideration and approval by the Board; this proposal shall include a strategic plan for implementation and take into account the following guidelines:

(a) The need to take fully into account the findings of the United Nations Development Programme evaluation 'Global interregional and regional programmes: an evaluation of impact' (November 1996) as well as the comments of delegations at the current session;

(b) The need to focus on programme activities that: (i) have a global nature and perspective; (ii) cannot be implemented under regional or country programmes; (iii) can enhance national efforts to achieve Sustainable Human Development;

(c) The need to prioritize programme activities and focus them, within its existing mandate and on priority areas, where the United Nations Development Programme can make a real difference;

(d) The need to avoid duplication while strengthening collaboration with relevant bodies within and external to the United Nations system;

4. Stresses that the revised proposal should:

(a) Contain, for the information of the Board, a detailed overview of ongoing activities which will be discontinued during 1997-1999;

(b) Specify how programme activities will be monitored and evaluated, based on performance indicators and benchmarks, particularly concerning their impact at the country level;

5. Decides that in the meantime:

(a) Activities for which commitments have already been made shall continue;

(b) Up to a total of 33.3 per cent from the global resources under line 1.3 can be committed for activities, in a manner consistent with the guidelines outlined in paragraphs 3 (a) to 3 (d) of the present decision;

(c) The revised proposal should include, as an annex, a list of ongoing and planned activities for the information of the Executive Board.

17 January 1997

97/6. Overview of decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its first regular session 1997

The Executive Board

Recalls that during the first regular session 1997 it:

ITEM 1: ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Elected the following Bureau for 1997:

President: Mr. Hans Lundborg (Sweden)
Vice-President: Mr. Bruce Lutangu Namakando (Zambia)
Vice-President: Mr. Mochamed Slamet Hidayat (Indonesia)
Vice-President: Mr. Sorin Mihail Tanasescu (Romania)
Vice-President: Ambassador John William Ashe (Antigua and Barbuda)

Approved the agenda and work plan for its first regular session 1997 (DP/1997/L.1) as orally amended;

Approved the report of the third regular session 1996 (DP/1996/39);

Took note of the progress report on the work of the ad hoc working group on rules of procedure (DP/1997/CRP.1);

Took note of the oral report by the Secretary of the Board on the implementation of decision 96/45 on documentation;

Approved the annual work plan 1997 for UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board as orally amended and annexed to the present decision;[1]

Agreed to the following schedule of future sessions of the Executive Board in 1997 subject to the approval of the Committee on Conferences:

Second regular session 1997: 10-14 March 1997

Annual session 1997: 12-23 May 1997 (New York)

Third regular session 1997: 15-19 September 1997

Agreed to the following tentative schedule of future sessions of the Executive Board in 1998:

First regular session 1998: 19-23 January 1998

Second regular session 1998: 20-24 April 1998

Annual session 1998 (Geneva): 25 May-5 June 1998

Third regular session 1998: 7-11 September 1998

Agreed to the subjects to be discussed at the second regular session 1997 of the Board, as listed in table 2 of the annex to the present decision;

UNFPA Segment

ITEM 2: UNFPA: COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS

Approved the assistance to the Government of Côte d'Ivoire (DP/FPA/CP/169);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Djibouti (DP/FPA/CP/167);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Kenya (DP/FPA/CP/168);

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[1] The work plan will be updated on the basis of further amendments adopted throughout the year.

Approved the assistance to the Government of Malawi (DP/FPA/CP/162);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Mexico (DP/FPA/CP/161);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Mongolia (DP/FPA/CP/170);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Morocco (DP/FPA/CP/166);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Nepal (DP/FPA/CP/165);

Approved the assistance to the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania (DP/FPA/CP/164);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Zambia (DP/FPA/CP/163);

Approved the request for extension of, and additional resources for, the UNFPA country programme for Bangladesh (DP/FPA/1997/2);

Approved the request for extension of, and additional resources for, the UNFPA country programme for Nicaragua (DP/FPA/1997/1);

Approved the request for extension of, and additional resources for, the UNFPA country programme for the South Pacific (DP/FPA/1997/3);

Agreed to consider UNFPA country programmes at the second regular session 1997, on a no-objection basis, for that session only, without pre-judging the outcome of the discussion on decision 96/13 at the annual session 1997;

ITEM 3: UNFPA: FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Adopted decision 97/2 of 16 January 1997 on UNFPA audit reports;

ITEM 4: UNFPA: COORDINATION IN HEALTH POLICY AND PROGRAMMES

Adopted decision 97/1 of 16 January 1997 on coordination in health policy and programming, follow-up to Executive Board decision 96/38;

UNDP/UNFPA Segment

ITEM 5: HARMONIZATION OF PRESENTATION OF BUDGETS

Approved the proposed format for the biennial support budget of UNDP and UNFPA as contained in document DP/1997/2;

UNDP Segment

ITEM 6: COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS

I

Approved the following country cooperation frameworks:

First country cooperation framework for Belize (DP/CCF/BEL/1);

First country cooperation framework for the Czech Republic (DP/CCF/CZE/1);

First country cooperation framework for Hungary (DP/CCF/HUN/1);

First country cooperation framework for Kazakstan (DP/CCF/KAZ/1);

First country cooperation framework for Kyrgyzstan (DP/CCF/KYR/1);

First country cooperation framework for the Republic of Moldova (DP/CCF/MOL/1);

First country cooperation framework for the Slovak Republic (DP/CCF/SLO/1);

II

Approved the regional cooperation framework for Latin America and the Caribbean (DP/RCF/RLA/1);

III

Adopted decision 97/5 of 17 January 1997 on the first global cooperation framework (DP/GCF/1);

IV

Took note of the extension of the following country programmes:

Extension of the sixth country programme for Algeria (DP/CP/ALG/6/EXTENSION I);

Extension of the fifth country programme for Bahrain (DP/CP/BAH/5/EXTENSION I);

Extension of the sixth country programme for Jordan (DP/CP/JOR/6/EXTENSION I);

V

Took note of the note of the Administrator on UNDP assistance to Myanmar (DP/1997/4);

ITEM 7: UNDP: FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Adopted decision 97/3 of 16 January 1997 on UNDP audit reports;

Took note of the report of the Administrator on the implementation of decision 96/40 on management, accountability and reserve for field accommodation (DP/1997/CRP.3) with the comments made thereon;

Took note of the additional information on cost segments at UNDP headquarters (DP/1997/CRP.4);

ITEM 8: UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR WOMEN

Adopted decision 97/4 of 17 January 1997 on the United Nations Development Fund for Women;

ITEM 9: OTHER MATTERS

Requested the Administrator to submit, at its second regular session 1997, a revised conference room paper on follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolution 95/56, taking into consideration comments made during its debate at the first regular session 1997;

Took note of the oral progress report by the Associate Administrator on the implementation of the UNDP accountability framework;

Took note of the closure of the Cyprus country office as reported on in document DP/1997/5.

17 January 1997

Annex

UNDP/UNFPA EXECUTIVE BOARD: WORK PLAN 1997

1. In its decision 96/25, the Executive Board decided, *inter alia*, to introduce an annual work plan and, in paragraph 5 of the same decision, requested that UNDP and UNFPA prepare, for the third regular session "an outline of issues that could be considered by the Board in 1997, based on previous deliberations of the Board and the organizational priorities and objectives set for 1997". Pursuant to that request, the present document proposes a tentative agenda for each session of the Executive Board in 1997, prepared on the basis of the outlines of UNDP and UNFPA issues presented to the Board at its third regular session 1996 (see DP/1996/CRP.13) and taking into account the comments made by the Board at that session.

2. As discussed at the third regular session 1996, the priority issues for UNDP in 1997 are:

(a) Building poverty eradication into UNDP policy and programming as the top priority;

(b) Management of change;

(c) Resource mobilization;

(d) Implementation of the new programming arrangements;

(e) Supporting the resident coordinator system;

(f) Financial and managerial oversight and planning.

3. Priorities (a), (b), (c) and (e) will be addressed at the annual session of the Executive Board, in the context of the annual report of the Administrator.

4. Regarding the implementation of the new programming arrangements, it is proposed that country cooperation frameworks be taken up by the Executive Board as soon as they are ready for submission, including at the annual session of the Board, in order not to delay their implementation.

5. In addition, it is proposed that a thematic discussion on the national execution modality be taken up at the second regular session of the Executive Board.

6. Various aspects of financial and managerial oversight and planning, i.e., priority (f), will be dealt with at each session.

7. The tentative agendas proposed for the UNFPA segments translate the UNFPA priority issues agreed upon at the third regular session 1996 into specific agenda items. These issues were presented in the UNFPA outline of priority issues for 1997 (see DP/1996/CRP.13) under five priority themes:

(a) Programme priorities;

(b) Programme implementation;

(c) Programme support;

(d) Resources;

(e) Financial, budgetary and administrative matters, including audit.

8. Country programmes and related matters figure significantly in the proposals for the UNFPA segments of the agendas, since the Fund will present an unprecedented number of country programmes for approval in 1997. UNFPA proposes to take up most of the other priority issues presented under themes (a), (b), (c) and (d) during the annual session, since many are to be reported on in the context of the report of the Executive Director for 1996 and the UNFPA work plan for 1998-2001.

9. UNFPA financial, budgetary and administrative matters are proposed for the third regular session in September, as are the issues concerning the monitoring and implementation of technical support services arrangements and the evaluation of UNFPA training activities.

10. Finally, as suggested at the third regular session 1996, the reports of the Administrator and the Executive Director to the Economic and Social Council, the format of which will be agreed jointly among the funds and programmes, will include subjects derived from General Assembly resolution 50/120 for consideration by the Council in 1997, such as capacity-building, country and regional-level coordination, and resources.

EXECUTIVE BOARD OF UNDP/UNFPA TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR 1997

Table 1. First regular session 1997 (13-17 January 1997)

(5 working days)

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time allotted	Item and subject
1				ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
	Official (DP/1997/L.1)	A	((	Provisional agenda, annotations, list of documents
	Official	A	((	Report on the third regular session 1996
	Official	I	(1/2 day (	Decisions adopted by the Executive Board in 1996
	CRP	I	(((	Matters relating to the rules of procedure, documentation and functioning of the Executive Board
	CRP	A	((	Annual work plan 1997 for UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board
				UNFPA SEGMENT
2				COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS
	Official	A	1 day	Country programmes
3				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	Official	I	1/2 day	Audit reports
4	Official	A	1/2 day	COORDINATION IN HEALTH POLICY AND PROGRAMMING
				UNDP/UNFPA SEGMENT
5				HARMONIZATION OF PRESENTATION OF BUDGETS
	Official	A	1/2 day	Harmonization of presentation of budgets and accounts
				UNDP SEGMENT
6				COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS
	Official	A	1/2 day	Country cooperation frameworks and global/regional cooperation frameworks

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time allotted	Item and subject
7				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	Official	I	(	Audit reports
	CRP	I	(((	Implementation of decision 96/40 on management, accountability and Reserve for Field Accommodation
	CRP	I	1/2 day ((	Additional information on cost segments at UNDP headquarters
	Oral	I	((	Report on the accountability system of UNDP
8				UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR WOMEN
	CRP	I	1/2 day	Follow-up to decision 96/43
9				OTHER MATTERS
	CRP	I	1/4 day	Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolution 95/56
	Oral			UNDP: Report on accountability
	Official			Closure of the Cyprus country office

Abbreviations: A = action; CRP = conference room paper; and I = information.

Table 2. Second regular session 1997 (10-14 March 1997)

(5 working days)

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time allotted	Item and subject
1				ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
	Official (DP/1997/L.2)	A	((	Provisional agenda, annotations, list of documents
	Official	A	((	Report on the first regular session 1997
			(	UNDP SEGMENT
2			1½ days ((	COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS
	Official	A	((	Country cooperation frameworks and regional cooperation frameworks
	CRP	A	((	Format and timing for review of the new programming arrangements (96/7)
	Official			Earmarkings for TRAC 1997-1999
	CRP	I	1/2 day	National execution
3				UNITED NATIONS CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT FUND
	Official	A	1/2 day	United Nations Capital Development Fund (including strategy and business plans)
4				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	CRP	A	1/2 day	Outline of overall strategy for the budget for the biennium 1998-1999 (96/41, para. 4)
	Oral	I		Report on the accountability system of UNDP
				UNFPA SEGMENT
5	Official	A	(2 days (	COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS
6			(	OTHER MATTERS, including:
	Oral			Report on Reserve for Field Accommodation
	Oral			Revised report on follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolution 95/56
	CRP			Response to the recommendations of the external evaluation of UNIFEM

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time allotted	Item and subject
	Oral			UNFPA - Report on follow-up to Executive Board decision 93/1
	Official			Proposed revision of UNFPA Financial Regulations

Abbreviations: A = action; CRP = conference room paper; and I = information.

Note: An informal briefing on the Special Initiative for Africa will be held during the session.

Table 3. Annual session 1997 (12-23 May 1997)

(10 working days)

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time allotted	Item and subject
1				ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
	Official (DP/1997/L.3)	A	((	Provisional agenda, annotations, list of documents/work plan
	Official	A	((	Report on the second regular session 1997
	Official	A	((	Rules of procedure: report of ad hoc open-ended working group
			(	UNFPA SEGMENT
2	Official		1½ days (((((((((((	REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR 1996 - Core programme areas - Evaluation - Implementation of ICPD Programme of Action - Global contraceptive commodity programme - Resources
3	Official	A	1/2 day	INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY
4	Official	A	1/2 day	WORK PLAN AND REQUEST FOR EXPENDITURE AUTHORITY, 1998-2001
5	Official	I	1/2 day	STATUS OF FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION OF UNFPA COUNTRY PROGRAMMES
6	Official	A	1 day	COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS
				UNDP/UNFPA SEGMENT
7				REPORTS TO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
	Official	I	1/2 day	Report to the Economic and Social Council: report of the Administrator
	Official			Report to the Economic and Social Council: report of the Executive Director
				UNDP SEGMENT
8				ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATOR
	Official	A	(	Introduction by the Administrator
	Official	A	((	Main programme record, including reporting on special funds
			(	Assistance to the Palestinian people
			((	NADAF and the Special Initiative for Africa
	Official	I	2½ days* ((	Evaluation, including impact measurement

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time allotted	Item and subject
			(	Resources
	Official	I	(	Internal oversight and accountability
			(	Reports of the Joint Inspection Unit
			(	Change management
	Official	I	(	Statistical annex
	Official	I	((	Subcontracts awarded and major equipment ordered
	CRP	I	(	Poverty eradication
9				COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS
	Official	A	1/2 day	Country cooperation frameworks and regional cooperation frameworks
10				COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION PROGRAMME
	Official	A	1/2 day	UNDP information and publication policy (96/22)
11				UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR WOMEN
	Official	A	1/2 day	United Nations Development Fund for Women (95/18)
12			((	FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	CRP	I	1 day ((	Report on the accountability system of UNDP
13			((	UNITED NATIONS OFFICE FOR PROJECT SERVICES
	Official	A	((	Report on the United Nations Office for Project Services (96/33)
14			1/2 day	OTHER MATTERS

Abbreviations: A = action; CRP = conference room paper; I = information; and ICPD = International Conference on Population and Development.

* Including a special panel discussion on poverty eradication.

Table 4. Third regular session 1997 (15-23 September 1997)

(5 working days)

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time allotted	Item and subject
1				ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
	Official (DP/1997/L.4)	A	((	Provisional agenda, annotations, list of documents
	Official	A	1/2 day (	Report on the annual session 1997
	CRP	I	((	Outline for Executive Board work plan 1998
				UNDP SEGMENT
2				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	Official	A	((	Budget estimates for the biennium 1998-1999 (96/41, para. 4)
	Official	A	(1½ days (	Revised budget estimates for the biennium 1996-1997
	Official	I	((	Annual review of the financial situation 1996
	Official	I	((	Activities of Inter-Agency Procurement Services Office
3				UNOPS: FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	Official	A	((	Budget estimates for the biennium 1998-1999
	Official	A	1/2 day ((	Revised budget estimates for the biennium 1996-1997
	Official	I	(	Audit reports
4				COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS
	Official	A	1/2 day	Country cooperation frameworks and regional cooperation frameworks
				UNFPA SEGMENT
6				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	Official	A	(	Biennial budget estimates
	Official	A	(	Annual financial review, 1996
	Official	I	(1½ days ((	Implementation and monitoring of technical support services arrangements
	Official	I	((	Evaluation of UNFPA training activities

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time allotted	Item and subject
7	Official	A	(	COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS
			1/2 day (	
8			(	OTHER MATTERS

Abbreviations: A - action; CRP - conference room paper; I - information; and UNOPS - United Nations Office for Project Services.

97/7. Revision of UNFPA Financial Regulations

The Executive Board

Approves the inclusion of a new regulation 14.7 in the UNFPA Financial Regulations and Rules under Article XIV - "Internal Control":

"Regulation 14.7 In conformity with Executive Board decision 96/3, UNFPA may procure and hold stocks of essential contraceptive products in order to promptly respond to emergency requests for assistance. The inventory value of these stock holdings shall be shown in the accounts as an asset."

14 March 1997

97/8. United Nations Capital Development Fund

The Executive Board

1. Welcomes the report of the Administrator (DP/1997/9);

2. Endorses the implementation of the new policy focus of the United Nations Capital Development Fund, which concentrates its activities on local governance, decentralization, participation and micro-financing;

3. Also endorses the current reorganization efforts, with a view to creating a more decentralized and effective organization and recommends that in the monitoring and evaluation, particular attention should be given to the modus operandi of the Fund and the relationship between headquarters and the field;

4. Encourages the Fund and the United Nations Development Programme to intensify their collaboration in all relevant areas, including in the design and implementation of country cooperation frameworks, taking into account the comparative advantages of the Fund, e.g., in the field of local governance and micro-financing;

5. Requests the Fund to improve the dissemination of successful project and programme experience in order to foster replication of these successes;

6. Welcomes the commitment of a number of donor countries to support the Fund in a more predictable and assured manner and invites traditional and new donors as well as recipient countries to contribute to the Fund.

14 March 1997

97/9. Guidelines for improving the implementation of regional cooperation programmes

The Executive Board

1. Requests the Administrator to present to the Executive Board for its consideration and approval at the first regular session 1998, an implementation strategy paper for each individual regional cooperation programme; the implementation strategy papers should incorporate the following elements:

(a) The findings of the United Nations Development Programme evaluation entitled "Global, interregional and regional programmes: an evaluation of impact" (November 1996);

(b) A more detailed assessment of lessons learned from previous regional cooperation programmes and their integration into the programming and implementation of the next programmes;

(c) A narrow range of priorities and themes, within a programme-based approach, focusing on areas requiring regional cooperation;

(d) The identification of the role and comparative advantage of UNDP participation in initiatives for regional cooperation and its collaboration with relevant bodies of the United Nations system, including the regional commissions;

(e) Clear linkages between thematic areas in regional programmes and global programmes and between thematic areas and activities in regional programmes and priority programmes at the country level;

(f) An articulation of the strategy through objectives-based programme management techniques, such as the logical framework technique;

(g) A clear presentation of expected results, including identification of target groups and beneficiaries;

(h) A clear linkage between programme objectives and budgetary resources for implementation;

(i) An estimate of resource allocation among thematic areas and institutions;

2. Also requests that each implementation strategy paper contain a strategy for monitoring and evaluation, including practical performance indicators and benchmarks, which will enable the Executive Board to assess the impact of regional cooperation programmes;

3. Emphasizes the need for clear, concise language in the presentation of the regional implementation strategy papers;

4. Also emphasizes the need for regional ownership of the regional programmes and the importance of strengthening the capacity for regional execution

by national, subregional and regional institutions, including by the private sector, non-governmental organizations, and academic institutions;

5. Further emphasizes the need to ensure sustainability in the implementation of thematic initiatives included in the regional cooperation programme;

6. Requests the Administrator to present at the first regular session 1998, a timetable for the mid-term review of all regional programmes and to include in the implementation strategy paper for each region a proposal concerning the methodology for the mid-term review;

7. Also requests the Administrator, based on the experience gained during the implementation of the present decision, to elaborate strategic guidelines for the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the regional programme that will apply to all regions.

14 March 1997

97/10. Overview of decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its second regular session 1997

The Executive Board

Recalls that during the second regular session 1997 it:

ITEM 1: ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Approved the agenda and work plan for its second regular session 1997 (DP/1997/L.2/Rev.1) as amended;

Agreed to the following schedule of future sessions of the Executive Board in 1997 and 1998 subject to approval of the Committee of Conferences:

Annual session 1997	12-23 May 1997
Third regular session 1997	15-19 September 1997
First regular session 1998	19-23 January 1998
Second regular session 1998	20-24 April 1998
Annual session 1998	8-19 June 1998 (Geneva)
Third regular session 1998	14-18 September 1998

Agreed to the subjects to be discussed at the annual session 1997 of the Board, as listed in table 3 of the annex;

UNDP SEGMENT

ITEM 2: COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS

Adopted decision 97/9 of 14 March 1997 on guidelines for improving the implementation of regional cooperation programmes;

Approved the following regional cooperation frameworks taking into account the comments made thereon:

First regional cooperation framework for Africa (DP/RCF/RBA/1);

First regional cooperation framework for Asia and the Pacific (DP/RCF/RAP/1);

First regional cooperation framework for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (DP/RCF/REC/1);

Approved the following country cooperation frameworks:

I

First country cooperation framework for Eritrea (DP/CCF/ERI/1);

First country cooperation framework for Ethiopia (DP/CCF/ETH/1);

First country cooperation framework for Mauritania (DP/CCF/MAU/1);

First country cooperation framework for Namibia (DP/CCF/NAM/1);

First country cooperation framework for Uganda (DP/CCF/UGA/1);

II

First country cooperation framework for Bhutan (DP/CCF/BHU/1);

First country cooperation framework for India (DP/CCF/IND/1);

First country cooperation framework for Laos (DP/CCF/LAO/1);

First country cooperation framework for Mongolia (DP/CCF/MON/1);

First country cooperation framework for Papua New Guinea (DP/CCF/PNG/1);

III

First country cooperation framework for Croatia (DP/CCF/CRO/1);

First country cooperation framework for Romania (DP/CCF/ROM/1);

First country cooperation framework for Uzbekistan (DP/CCF/UZB/1);

First country cooperation framework for Latvia (DP/CCF/LAT/1);

First country cooperation framework for Poland (DP/CCF/POL/1);

IV

First country cooperation framework for Colombia (DP/CCF/COL/1);

First country cooperation framework for Panama (DP/CCF/PAN/1);

V

Took note of the extension of the following country programmes:

Extension of the fifth country programme for Haiti (DP/CP/HAI/5/EXTENSION I);

Extension of the sixth country programme for Kenya (DP/CP/KEN/6/EXTENSION I);

VI

Took note of the first cooperation framework for technical cooperation among developing countries (DP/CF/TCDC/1) with comments made thereon;

VII

Took note of the note by the Administrator on assistance to Afghanistan (DP/1997/7);

Took note of the format and timing for review of the new programming cycle (DP/1997/CRP.7);

Took note of the earmarkings for the target for resource assignment from the core for 1997-1999 (DP/1997/8);

Took note of the note on national execution (DP/1997/CRP.8) with the comments made thereon;

ITEM 3. UNITED NATIONS CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

Adopted decision 97/8 of 14 March 1997 on United Nations Capital Development Fund;

ITEM 4. UNDP: FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Took note of strategy outline for the budget 1998-1999 (DP/1997/CRP.9) with comments made thereon;

UNFPA SEGMENT

ITEM 5: UNFPA: COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS

I

Approved the assistance to the Government of Angola (DP/FPA/CP/173);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Burkina Faso (DP/FPA/CP/187);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Central African Republic (DP/FPA/CP/182);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Comoros (DP/FPA/CP/171);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Eritrea (DP/FPA/CP/183);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Gambia (DP/FPA/CP/178);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Guinea (DP/FPA/CP/181);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Namibia (DP/FPA/CP/175);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Nigeria (DP/FPA/CP/190);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Senegal (DP/FPA/CP/176);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Togo (DP/FPA/CP/172);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Uganda (DP/FPA/CP/177);

II

Approved the assistance to the Government of India (DP/FPA/CP/193);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Lao People's Democratic Republic (DP/FPA/CP/174);

III

Approved the assistance to the English-speaking Caribbean countries (DP/FPA/CP/179);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Cuba (DP/FPA/CP/188);

Approved the assistance to the Government of the Dominican Republic (DP/FPA/CP/186);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Ecuador (DP/FPA/CP/192);

Approved the assistance to the Government of El Salvador (DP/FPA/CP/189);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Haiti (DP/FPA/CP/191);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Peru (DP/FPA/CP/185);

IV

Approved the assistance to the Government of Lebanon (DP/FPA/CP/184);

Approved the assistance to the Government of Sudan (DP/FPA/CP/194);

V

Approved the assistance to the Government of Albania (DP/FPA/CP/180;

ITEM 6: OTHER MATTERS

Took note of the report on follow-up to the Economic and Social Council resolution 95/56 (DP/1997/CRP.10);

Took note of the response to the recommendations of the external evaluation of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (DP/1997/CRP.11) with the comments made thereon;

Took note of the oral report on the Reserve for Field Accommodation;

Took note of the oral report on the accountability system of UNDP;

Took note of the oral report on follow-up to Executive Board decision 97/1: UNICEF/WHO/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health;

Approved the nominations of Antigua and Barbuda, Netherlands, Russian Federation and Zambia to represent the Executive Board on the new UNICEF/WHO/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health and authorized the Bureau to approve a nomination from the Asia and Pacific region, with the nominations of all representatives and alternates to be confirmed at the annual session; also approved that the President of the Executive Board serve as ex officio member of the Committee.

Adopted decision 97/7 of 14 March 1997 on the revision of UNFPA Financial Regulations.

14 March 1997

ANNEX

EXECUTIVE BOARD OF UNDP/UNFPA TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR 1997

Table 1. First regular session 1997 (13-17 January 1997)
(5 working days)

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
1				ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
	Official (DP/1997/L.1)	A	1/2 day	Provisional agenda, annotations, list of documents
	Official	A		Report on the third regular session 1996
	Official	I		Decisions adopted by the Executive Board in 1996
	CRP	I		Matters relating to the rules of procedure, documentation and functioning of the Executive Board
	CRP	A		Annual work plan 1997 for UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board
				UNFPA SEGMENT
2				COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS
	Official	A	1 day	Country programmes
3				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	Official	I	1/2 day	Audit reports
4	Official	A	1/2 day	COORDINATION IN HEALTH POLICY AND PROGRAMMING
				UNDP/UNFPA SEGMENT
5				HARMONIZATION OF PRESENTATION OF BUDGETS
	Official	A	1/2 day	Harmonization of presentation of budgets and accounts
				UNDP SEGMENT
6				COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS
	Official	A	1/2 day	Country cooperation frameworks and global/regional cooperation frameworks
7				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	Official	I		Audit reports

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
1				ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
	CRP	I	{	Implementation of decision 96/40 on management, accountability and reserve for field accommodation
	CRP	I	1/2 day {	Additional information on cost segments at UNDP headquarters
	Oral	I	{	Report on the accountability system of UNDP
8				UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR WOMEN
	CRP	I	1/2 day	Follow-up to decision 96/43
9				OTHER MATTERS
	CRP	I	1/4 day	Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolution 95/56

Abbreviations: A = action; CRP = conference room paper; and I = information.

Table 2. Second regular session 1997 (10-14 March 1997)

(5 working days)

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
1				ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
	Official (DP/1997/L.2)	A		Provisional agenda, annotations, list of documents
	Official	A		Report on the first regular session 1997
				UNDP SEGMENT
2			1½ days	COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS
	Official	A		Country cooperation frameworks and regional cooperation frameworks
	CRP	A		Format and timing for review of the new programming arrangements (96/7)
	Official	I		Earmarkings for the target for resource assignment from the core (TRAC) for 1997-1999
	CRP	I	½ day	National execution
3				UNITED NATIONS CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT FUND
	Official	A	½ day	United Nations Capital Development Fund (including strategy and business plans)
4				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	CRP	A	½ day	Outline of overall strategy for the budget for the biennium 1998-1999 (96/41, para. 4)
	Oral	I		Report on the accountability system of UNDP
				UNFPA SEGMENT
6	Official	A		COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS
7				OTHER MATTERS including:
	Oral	I		- Report on Reserve for Field Accommodation
	CRP	I	2 days	- Revised report on follow-up to ECOSOC resolution 95/56
	CRP	I		- Response to the recommendations of the external evaluation of UNIFEM

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
	Official	A	((	- Proposed revision of UNFPA Financial Regulations
	Oral	I	(((	- Report on the UNICEF/WHO/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health

Abbreviations: A = action; CRP = conference room paper; and I = information.

__Note__: Informal consultations on UNDP Change Management held during the session.

Table 3. Annual session 1997 (12-23 May 1997)
(10 working days)

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
1				ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
	Official (DP/1997/L.3)	A		Provisional agenda, annotations, list of documents/work plan
	Official	A		Report on the first and second regular sessions 1997
	Official	A		Rules of procedure: report of ad hoc open-ended working group
				UNFPA SEGMENT
2	Official			REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR 1996
		I I I	1½ days	- Programme priorities - Statistical overview - Regional overview
3	Official	I	½ day	- Evaluation activities
4	Official	A	½ day	WORK PLAN FOR 1998-2001
5	Official	A	1 day	PROGRAMMING PROCESS
6	Official	A	½ day	INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY
				UNDP/UNFPA SEGMENT
7	Official	I	½ day	Reports of UNDP and UNFPA to the Economic and Social Council
2 & 8	Official	I		Reports of UNDP and UNFPA on internal oversight
				UNDP SEGMENT
8				ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATOR
	Official	A		Introduction by the Administrator
	Official	A		Main programme record, including reporting on special funds (7 parts)
	Official	I		United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for Africa
	Official	I		Assistance to the Palestinian people
	Official	I	2½ days[*]	Evaluation
	Official + CRP	A		Change management
	Official	I		Report of the Joint Inspection Unit
	Official	I		Statistical annex
	CRP	I		Resources

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[*] Timing includes one day special event on poverty eradication to be held on Tuesday, 20 May 1997.

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
9				COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS
	Official	A	½ day	Country cooperation frameworks and regional cooperation frameworks
10				COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION PROGRAMME
	Official	I	½ day	UNDP information and publication policy (96/22)
11				UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR WOMEN
	Official	A	½ day	United Nations Development Fund for Women (95/18)
12				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	CRP	I	1 day	Report on the accountability system of UNDP
13				UNITED NATIONS OFFICE FOR PROJECT SERVICES
	Official	A		Report on the United Nations Office for Project Services (96/33)
14			½ day	OTHER MATTERS

Abbreviations: A = action; CRP = conference room paper; I = information; and ICPD = International Conference on Population and Development.

Table 4. Third regular session 1997 (15-23 September 1997)

(5 working days)

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
1				ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
	Official (DP/1997/L.4)	A		Provisional agenda, annotations, list of documents
	Official	A	½ day	Report on the annual session 1997
	CRP	I		Outline for Executive Board work plan 1998
				UNDP SEGMENT
2				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	Official	A		Budget estimates for the biennium 1998-1999 - 96/41, para. 4 - (including detailed costs of publication and of their distribution - 96/22)
	Official	A	1½ days	Revised budget estimates for the biennium 1996-1997
	Official	I		Annual review of the financial situation 1996
	Official	I		Activities of Inter-Agency Procurement Services Office
	Official	I		Subcontracts awarded and major equipment ordered
3				UNOPS: FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	Official	A		Budget estimates for the biennium 1998-1999
	Official	A	½ day	Revised budget estimates for the biennium 1996-1997
	Official	I		Audit reports
4				COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS
	Official	A	½ day	Country cooperation frameworks and regional cooperation frameworks
		A		Revised global cooperation framework (97/5

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
1				ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
				UNFPA SEGMENT
6				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	Official	A	{	Biennial budget estimates
	Official	A	{	Annual financial review, 1996
	Official	I	1½ days {	Implementation and monitoring of technical support services arrangements
	Official	I	{	Evaluation of UNFPA training activities
7	Official	A	{	COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS
			½ day {	
8			{	OTHER MATTERS

Abbreviations: A = action; CRP = conference room paper; I = information; and UNOPS = United Nations Office for Project Services.

Note: Review of field visits will be taken up in informal consultations during the session.

97/11. UNFPA Work plan for 1998-2001 and request for programme expenditure authority

The Executive Board

1. Endorses the programme resource planning proposals of the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund set out in paragraphs 7 to 18;

2. Approves the request for the 1998 programme expenditure authority at a level equal to expected new programmable resources for 1998, currently estimated at $278 million;

3. Endorses the use of the following estimates of new programmable resources from regular resources for programme planning for the 1999-2001 period; $298 million for 1999; $318 million for 2000; and $341 million for 2001;

4. Also endorses the use of the following estimates of new programmable resources from multi-bilateral funding; $25 million per year for the years 1998-2001.

14 May 1997

97/12. Recommendations on the programming process of the United Nations Population Fund

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the report of the Executive Director on the programming process of the United Nations Population Fund (DP/FPA/1997/9);

2. Recognizes that the primary responsibility for developing a country programme lies with the Government of the programme country with the support of the United Nations Population Fund;

3. Requests that in its programming process the United Nations Population Fund take into account the following, bearing in mind the need to limit the administrative burden:

(a) That during the Programme Review and Strategy Development process, the United Nations Population Fund will offer briefings at the field level for interested parties on the emerging findings;

(b) That the United Nations Population Fund will make available the summary of the Programme Review and Strategy Development process (the country recommendation), which will show: (i) proposed strategic actions and their rationale; (ii) the comparative advantage of the United Nations Population Fund and its complementarity vis-à-vis other actors; and (iii) possible thematic areas, drawing throughout also on lessons learned from other programmes;

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(c) That the country recommendation will be made available by the secretariat to all members of the United Nations Population Fund, upon request, who may offer views on the recommendation, within six weeks of transmission, which the secretariat will take into account in further developing the programme; the United Nations Population Fund will inform the Executive Board of this process; these views will also be made available to all members of the United Nations Population Fund, upon request; the United Nations Population Fund may, if needed, arrange a discussion at headquarters with the participation of the programme country;

4. Requests that country programmes presented to the Executive Board contain clear statements of purpose, deliverables (for each sub-programme area), financial parameters and the indicators by which the United Nations Population Fund will measure programme performance, effectiveness and impact;

5. Decides that country programmes will be considered for approval by the Executive Board without discussion unless one is requested by more than one member, in writing, in principle two weeks before the session;

6. Recommends that the efforts of working towards harmonized arrangements for country programming processes in the United Nations system should, when possible, be coordinated and harmonized with other funds and programmes;

7. Requests that the operation of these arrangements be reviewed by the Executive Director at such a time as to allow a report to be presented to the Executive Board at its annual session 2000.

16 May 1997

97/13. UNFPA information and communication strategy

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the report on the United Nations Population Fund information and communication strategy (DP/FPA/1997/8) and the comments made thereon by the Executive Board;

2. Endorses the overall goal of the United Nations Population Fund information and communication strategy, which is to promote the principles, goals and objectives of the International Conference on Population and Development and to help turn these principles, goals and objectives into practical reality at the national, regional and international levels;

3. Further endorses the specific goals and corresponding strategies of the information and communication activities of the United Nations Population Fund as contained in paragraphs 4 and 22 of the report;

4. Stresses the importance of maintaining linguistic balance in the electronic dissemination of information;

5. Also stresses that monitoring and evaluation are integral and important parts of information and communication activities and that there is a need to strengthen these functions, taking into account the difficulty, methodologically and operationally, of measuring the impact or effectiveness of such activities;

6. Requests the Executive Director to report orally each year, at the annual session, on the progress in the implementation of the present decision and on the coordinating efforts undertaken in this area within the United Nations system;

7. Also requests the Executive Director to review the Fund's information and communication strategy in four years and to report thereon to the Executive Board at its annual session 2001.

16 May 1997

97/14. ICPD + 5: Five-year review of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development

The Executive Board

1. Notes with appreciation the proposal of the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund to undertake a review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development;

2. Requests the Executive Director to undertake preparatory activities for the review and appraisal within the mandate of the United Nations Population Fund;

3. Invites the President of the Executive Board to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session, through the forthcoming session of the Economic and Social Council, the proposal for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference of Population and Development, for the consideration of the General Assembly and subsequent decision on the process and modalities.

16 May 1997

97/15. Change management

The Executive Board

1. Recalls the existing legal framework of the United Nations Development Programme, including General Assembly resolution 2688 (XXV) of 10 December 1970;

2. Also recalls General Assembly resolutions 47/199 and 50/120 on the operational activities for development of the United Nations system and stresses the importance of their full implementation;

3. Commends the Administrator and United Nations Development Programme staff for the change management process and its overall direction, which aims to improve the level and quality of services and the strengthening of the overall impact on development of Programme activities through, inter alia, the decentralization of decision-making and responsibilities to the country level and enhanced accountability measures;

4. Recognizes that United Nations Development Programme change management shall be undertaken within the ongoing process of wider United Nations reform;

5. Stresses that national plans and priorities constitute the only viable frame of reference for the national programming of operational activities for development within the United Nations system, and that programmes should be based on such development plans and priorities, and should therefore be country-driven;

6. Also stresses in that context the need to take into account the outcomes and commitments of relevant United Nations conferences, as well as the individual mandates and complementarities of the organizations and bodies of the United Nations development system, bearing in mind the need to avoid duplication;

7. Further stresses the importance of financial, individual and performance accountability in the United Nations Development Programme and supports the efforts of the Administrator in this regard;

I. RESIDENT COORDINATOR SYSTEM

8. Welcomes measures taken by the United Nations Development Programme to improve its capacity to support the resident coordinator system, within the context of General Assembly resolutions 32/197, 44/211, 47/199 and 50/120, and requests the Programme to continue consultations with other funds and programmes on their respective roles and ownership in this regard;

II. RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

9. Emphasizes the importance of core resources as the foundation of the United Nations Development Programme resource base;

10. Stresses that, in pursuing resource mobilization at the request of programme countries, United Nations Development Programme country offices should not compromise their primary role of programme delivery and that such resources raised be used for programmes in accordance with country priorities and be included under an approved country cooperation framework;

III. THE IMPORTANCE OF EVALUATION

11. Welcomes the decision to establish a separate Evaluation Unit, the head of which will report directly to the Administrator and also welcomes the clearer link being made between evaluation, lessons learned and programme enhancement;

IV. HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

12. Recognizes the importance of the role that United Nations Development Programme staff must play in the change process and emphasizes that the implementation of the human resource development policy of the change management process should be in accordance with the existing provisions of the United Nations common system;

V. DECENTRALIZATION

13. Welcomes the proposals of the Administrator to strengthen the country focus and operations of the United Nations Development Programme;

14. Underlines the need for the change management process to take into account existing decisions and policies on capacity-building and national execution;

15. Supports the phased introduction of a small number of subregional resource facilities and requests the Administrator to report to the Executive Board at its annual session 2001 on an evaluation of the functions and impact of the facilities;

16. Requests the Administrator to provide an interim report, at the annual session 1998, through the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, on the budget implications, human resources implications and efficiency gains occasioned by the phased introduction of subregional resource facilities;

17. Emphasizes that, while establishing the subregional resource facilities in phases, the United Nations Development Programme shall take fully into account the diversity of regional and subregional circumstances; the need to ensure the involvement of national expertise available within the subregion; the need to avoid duplication of work undertaken by other subregional or regional institutions; and the demand-driven nature of these facilities;

18. Requests the Administrator, in the context of the presentation of the biennial budget, to report on the criteria for staffing country offices and to identify clearly any new and/or additional functions;

VI. IMPLEMENTATION

19. Urges the Administrator, and United Nations Development Programme staff at all levels, to implement change management while maintaining the primary focus of the Programme on programme delivery and quality at the country level;

20. Requests the Administrator to incorporate, in accordance with the existing legal framework of the United Nations Development Programme, the implementation of change management fully into budgetary and corporate planning and to report thereon to the Executive Board at the third regular session 1997 in the context of the biennial budget; and to provide at that session an updated implementation plan with further developed time-bound, and to the extent possible, quantifiable targets;

21. Further requests the Administrator to report to the Executive Board on the implementation of the present decision at each session;

22. Notes the proposal by the Administrator on the further focusing of United Nations Development Programme activities and core development services that are still subject to discussions by the Executive Board without losing momentum in the change management process and programme delivery and requests the Administrator to submit a report for discussions at the first regular session 1998.

VII. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

23. Requests the Administrator to include in the report to be presented in accordance with decision 96/44 at the first regular session of 1998 further analysis of the implications resulting from the change management process on the future policy direction of the United Nations Development Programme, inter alia, the role of the Programme in implementing programmes and projects, national execution and resource mobilization at the field level.

23 May 1997

97/16. Internal audit

The Executive Board

1. Welcomes the format of the reports on internal audit of the United Nations Development Programme (DP/1997/16/Add.6) and of the United Nations Population Fund (DP/FPA/1997/10, Part IV);

2. Takes note of the content of these reports and of the observations made by delegations during the debate;

3. Supports the proposals of the Administrator and Executive Director to strengthen the internal audit function of the United Nations Development Programme and of the United Nations Population Fund.

23 May 1997

97/17. UNDP communication and information policy

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the report of the Administrator on the implementation and strengthening of the United Nations Development Programme communication and information policy and the comments made thereon;

2. Welcomes the process initiated by the United Nations Development Programme in response to decision 96/22 leading to an improved strategy for communication and information policy and in this regard, recognizes the changes that have taken place since 1995 in creating better visibility and awareness for the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations system in the media and in the area of advocacy;

3. Stresses that such a strategy must be applied throughout the United Nations Development Programme and that its application should be duly monitored;

4. Emphasizes that more targeted, accurate, clear and frank public information is necessary to generate support for increased resources for the United Nations Development Programme;

5. Stresses that strategic targeting of the communication and information activities are essential to make the most effective use of resources available;

6. Also stresses the importance of maintaining linguistic balance in the electronic dissemination of information;

7. Welcomes the proposals for monitoring and evaluation which are integral and important parts of information and communication activities and need to be strengthened, taking into account the difficulty, methodologically and operationally, of measuring the impact or effectiveness of such activities;

8. Urges the Administrator to improve the focus and quality of public information on the impact of United Nations Development Programme activities at the country level and to develop new types of statistics and publications to this end, including indicators of impact;

9. Requests the Administrator to ensure that the efforts taken by the United Nations Development Programme in this regard are closely coordinated with those of the United Nations system, with a view to strengthening coherence and consistency in its communication;

10. Also requests the Administrator to submit a report at the annual session 1998 on progress in developing and implementing the communication and information policy of the United Nations Development Programme with particular reference to the implementation of the relevant change management recommendations, including budgetary implications.

23 May 1997

97/18. *United Nations Development Fund for Women*

The Executive Board

1. *Endorses* the Strategy and Business Plan of the United Nations Development Fund for Women contained in document DP/1997/18, taking into account the comments made at the Board;

2. *Emphasizes* that the implementation of the activities of the Strategy and Business Plan should be guided by the mandate of the United Nations Development Fund for Women;

3. *Requests* the United Nations Development Fund for Women to support innovative and experimental activities in implementing the Strategy and Business Plan within the context of commitments made in the Beijing Platform for Action;

4. *Also requests* the United Nations Development Fund for Women to develop further and strengthen its role as a catalyst with a view to strengthening the gender perspective of development programmes in recipient countries and increasing synergy with other United Nations organizations;

5. *Further requests* the United Nations Development Fund for Women to focus on strategic interventions and building upon its comparative advantages, in order to promote systemic change, in particular with regard to political and economic empowerment;

6. *Reaffirms* the role of the United Nations Development Fund for Women in linking technical expertise with policy formulation in the process of gender mainstreaming throughout the resident coordinator system;

7. *Requests* the United Nations Development Fund for Women to maintain a balance between potential impact and the needs of women in the application of the criteria for programme selection;

8. *Encourages* the United Nations Development Fund for Women to mobilize resources for its future activities from all available sources, including the private sector, and urges all Member States to contribute and to consider increasing their contributions to the United Nations Development Fund for Women;

9. *Decides* that the United Nations Development Fund for Women should report to the Executive Board orally in 1998 and in writing every alternate year and that the progress made by the Fund in implementing its Strategy and Business Plan should be contained in the annual report of the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme.

23 May 1997

97/19. Assistance to the Democratic Republic of the Congo

The Executive Board

1. *Recognizes* the important work of the United Nations Development Programme in emergency assistance, including prevention, rehabilitation and reconstruction, and the supportive contributions of the United Nations Population Fund in this work;

2. *Encourages* the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Population Fund to continue to monitor the implications for special assistance to the Democratic Republic of the Congo;

3. *Also encourages* the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Population Fund to be alert to the need for inter-agency assistance activities to the Democratic Republic of the Congo;

4. *Requests* the Administrator and the Executive Director to report at the third regular session 1997 on activities undertaken.

23 May 1997

97/20. Overview of decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its annual session 1997

The Executive Board

Recalls that during the annual session 1997 it:

ITEM 1: ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Approved the agenda and work plan for its annual session 1997 (DP/1997/L.3) as amended;

Approved the reports of the first and second regular sessions 1997 (DP/1997/6; DP/1997/12);

Adopted the draft rules of procedure for the Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA (DP/1997/13);

Agreed to the following schedule of future sessions of the Executive Board in 1997 and 1998 subject to approval of the Committee of Conferences:

Third regular session 1997	15-19 September 1997
First regular session 1998	19-23 January 1998
Second regular session 1998	20-24 April 1998
Annual session 1998	8-19 June 1998 (Geneva)
Third regular session 1998	14-18 September 1998

Agreed to the subjects to be discussed at the third regular session 1997 of the Board, as listed in the annex;

UNFPA SEGMENT

ITEM 2: UNFPA: REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR 1996: PROGRAMME PRIORITIES AND REGIONAL OVERVIEW

Took note of the report of the Executive Director for 1996 on programme priorities, statistical overview and regional overview (DP/FPA/1997/10, Parts I, I/Add.1 and Part II);

Adopted decision 97/14 of 16 May 1997 on the five-year review of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development;

Requested the Executive Director to revise the conference room paper on the consequences of resource shortfalls on meeting the goals of the International Conference on Population and Development (DP/FPA/1997/CRP.1) and to submit the revised report as an official document to the Executive Board at its third regular session 1997;

ITEM 3: UNFPA: EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

Took note of the report on UNFPA evaluation activities (DP/FPA/1997/10, Part III);

ITEM 4: UNFPA: WORK PLAN FOR 1998-2001

Adopted decision 97/11 of 14 May 1997 on the UNFPA work plan for 1998-2001 and request for programme expenditure authority;

ITEM 5: UNFPA: PROGRAMMING PROCESS

Adopted decision 97/12 of 16 May 1997 on the UNFPA programming process;

ITEM 6: UNFPA: INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Adopted decision 97/13 of 16 May 1997 on the UNFPA information and communication strategy;

UNDP/UNFPA SEGMENT

ITEM 7: REPORTS TO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Took note of the reports of the Administrator (DP/1997/15) and the Executive Director (DP/FPA/1997/10, Part V) to the Economic and Social Council and agreed to transmit them to the Economic and Social Council with comments made thereon;

ITEMS 2 AND 8: INTERNAL OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Adopted decision 97/16 of 23 May 1997 on internal audit;

UNDP SEGMENT

ITEM 8: UNDP: ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATOR AND RELATED MATTERS

Adopted decision 97/15 of 23 May 1997 on change management: UNDP 2001;

Took note of the report of the Administrator for 1996 on the introduction to the report, main programme record, assistance to the Palestinian people, statistical annex and reports of the Joint Inspection Unit (DP/1997/16/Addenda 1, 3, 5 and 8), with comments made thereon;

Took note of the report of the Administrator on evaluation (DP/1997/16/Add.4), with comments made thereon;

Took note of the report of the Administrator on the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa (DP/1997/16/Add.2), with comments made thereon;

Took note of the report of the Administrator on the outcome of the meeting of the High-Level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation Among Developing Countries and of the decisions adopted at the meeting (DP/1997/L.9).

ITEM 9: UNDP: COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS

Approved the following country cooperation frameworks:

I

First country cooperation framework for Comoros (DP/CCF/COI/1);

First country cooperation framework for Lesotho (DP/CCF/LES/1);

First country cooperation framework for Sierra Leone (DP/CCF/SIL/1), with comments made thereon;

First country cooperation framework for the United Republic of Tanzania (DP/CCF/URT/1);

First country cooperation framework for Zambia (DP/CCF/ZAM/1);

II

First country cooperation framework for Belarus (DP/CCF/BLR/1), with comments made thereon;

First country cooperation framework for Bosnia and Herzegovina (DP/CCF/BIH/1), with comments made thereon;

First country cooperation framework for Estonia (DP/CCF/EST/1);

First country cooperation framework for Lithuania (DP/CCF/LIT/1);

III

First country cooperation framework for Lebanon (DP/CCF/LEB/1), with comments made thereon;

First country cooperation framework for Morocco (DP/CCF/MOR/1);

First country cooperation framework for Tunisia (DP/CCF/TUN/1);

IV

First country cooperation framework for the Islamic Republic of Iran (DP/CCF/IRA/1);

ITEM 10. UNDP: COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION PROGRAMME

Adopted decision 97/17 of 23 May 1997 on the UNDP communication and information policy;

ITEM 11. UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR WOMEN

Adopted decision 97/18 of 23 May 1997 on the United Nations Development Fund for Women;

ITEM 12: FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Took note of the information provided on country office staff allocation (DP/1997/CRP.14) with the comments made thereon;

Took note of the report on the accountability system of UNDP (DP/1997/CRP.13);

ITEM 13: UNITED NATIONS OFFICE FOR PROJECT SERVICES

Took note of the report on the United Nations Office for Project Services (DP/1997/19 and DP/1997/19/Add.1/Rev.1);

ITEM 14: OTHER MATTERS

Adopted decision 97/19 on assistance to the Democratic Republic of the Congo;

Decided to consider the draft terms of reference of the WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health as contained in document DP/FPA/1997/CRP.5 at the third regular session 1997 (15-19 September 1997);

Took note of the reports of UNDP and UNFPA on core allocations to 20/20 (DP/1997/CRP.19 and DP/FPA/1997/CRP.3);

Took note of the oral presentation of the representatives of UNDP, UNFPA and UNAIDS on the UNAIDS programme.

23 May 1997

ANNEX

EXECUTIVE BOARD OF UNDP/UNFPA TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR 1997

Table 1. First regular session 1997 (13-17 January 1997)
(5 working days)

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
1				ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
	Official (DP/1997/L.1)	A	1/2 day	Provisional agenda, annotations, list of documents
	Official	A		Report on the third regular session 1996
	Official	I		Decisions adopted by the Executive Board in 1996
	CRP	I		Matters relating to the rules of procedure, documentation and functioning of the Executive Board
	CRP	A		Annual work plan 1997 for UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board
				UNFPA SEGMENT
2				COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS
	Official	A	1 day	Country programmes
3				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	Official	I	1/2 day	Audit reports
4	Official	A	1/2 day	COORDINATION IN HEALTH POLICY AND PROGRAMMING
				UNDP/UNFPA SEGMENT
5				HARMONIZATION OF PRESENTATION OF BUDGETS
	Official	A	1/2 day	Harmonization of presentation of budgets and accounts
				UNDP SEGMENT
6				COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS
	Official	A	1/2 day	Country cooperation frameworks and global/regional cooperation frameworks

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
7				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	Official	I		Audit reports
	CRP	I		Implementation of decision 96/40 on management, accountability and reserve for field accommodation
	CRP	I	1/2 day	Additional information on cost segments at UNDP headquarters
	Oral	I		Report on the accountability system of UNDP
8				UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR WOMEN
	CRP	I	1/2 day	Follow-up to decision 96/43
9				OTHER MATTERS
	CRP	I	1/4 day	Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolution 95/56

Abbreviations: A = action; CRP = conference room paper; and I = information.

Table 2. Second regular session 1997 (10-14 March 1997)

(5 working days)

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
1				ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
	Official (DP/1997/L.2)	A	{	Provisional agenda, annotations, list of documents
	Official	A	{	Report on the first regular session 1997
			{	Decisions adopted by the Executive Board at the first regular session 1997
			{	UNDP SEGMENT
2			1½ days {	COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS
	Official	A	{	Country cooperation frameworks and regional cooperation frameworks
	CRP	A	{	Format and timing for review of the new programming arrangements (96/7)
	Official	I	{	Earmarkings for the target for resource assignment from the core (TRAC) for 1997-1999
	CRP	I	½ day	National execution
3				UNITED NATIONS CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT FUND
	Official	A	½ day	United Nations Capital Development Fund (including strategy and business plans)
4				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	CRP	A	½ day {	Outline of overall strategy for the budget for the biennium 1998-1999 (96/41, para. 4)
	Oral	I	{	Report on the accountability system of UNDP
				UNFPA SEGMENT
6	Official	A	{	COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
7			2 days	OTHER MATTERS including:
	Oral	I		- Report on Reserve for Field Accommodation
	CRP	I		- Revised report on follow-up to ECOSOC resolution 95/56
	CRP	I		- Response to the recommendations of the external evaluation of UNIFEM
	Official	A		- Proposed revision of UNFPA Financial Regulations
	Oral	I		- Report on the UNICEF/WHO/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health

Abbreviations: A = action; CRP = conference room paper; and I = information.

Note: Informal consultations on UNDP Change Management held during the session.

Table 3. Annual session 1997 (12-23 May 1997)
(10 working days)

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
1				ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
	Official (DP/1997/L.3)	A		Provisional agenda, annotations, list of documents/work plan
	Official	A		Report on the first and second regular sessions 1997
	Official	A		Rules of procedure: report of ad hoc open-ended working group
				UNFPA SEGMENT
2	Official			REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR 1996
		I I I	1½ days	- Programme priorities - Statistical overview - Regional overview
3	Official	I	½ day	- Evaluation activities
4	Official	A	½ day	WORK PLAN FOR 1998-2001
5	Official	A	1 day	PROGRAMMING PROCESS
6	Official	A	½ day	INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY
				UNDP/UNFPA SEGMENT
7	Official	I	½ day	Reports of UNDP and UNFPA to the Economic and Social Council
2 & 8	Official	I		Reports of UNDP and UNFPA on internal oversight
				UNDP SEGMENT
8				ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATOR
	Official	A		Introduction by the Administrator
	Official	A		Main programme record, including reporting on special funds (7 parts)
	Official	I		United Nations System-wide Special Initiative for Africa
	Official	I		Assistance to the Palestinian people
	Official	I	2½ days*	Evaluation
	Official + CRP	A		Change management
	Official	I		Report of the Joint Inspection Unit
	Official	I		Statistical annex

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* Timing includes one day special event on poverty eradication to be held on Tuesday, 20 May 1997.

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
9				COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS
	Official	A	½ day	Country cooperation frameworks and regional cooperation frameworks
10				COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION PROGRAMME
	Official	I	½ day	UNDP information and publication policy (96/22)
11				UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR WOMEN
	Official	A	½ day	United Nations Development Fund for Women (95/18)
12				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	CRP	I	1 day	Report on the accountability system of UNDP
13				UNITED NATIONS OFFICE FOR PROJECT SERVICES
	Official	A		Report on the United Nations Office for Project Services (96/33)
14			½ day	OTHER MATTERS: UNDP and UNFPA and 20/20; oral report on UNAIDS

Abbreviations: A = action; CRP = conference room paper; I = information; and ICPD = International Conference on Population and Development.

Table 4. Third regular session 1997 (15-19 September 1997)

(5 working days)

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
1				ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
	Official (DP/1997/L.4)	A	(	Provisional agenda, annotations, list of documents
	Official	A	½ day (	Report on the annual session 1997
	Official	I	(	Decisions adopted at the annual session 1997
	CRP	I	(	Outline for Executive Board work plan 1998
				UNDP SEGMENT
2	CRP	I		UNDP CHANGE MANAGEMENT
				Updated implementation plan (97/15)
3				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	Official	A	1 day (	Budget estimates for the biennium 1998-1999 - 96/41, para. 4 - (including detailed costs of publication and of their distribution - 96/22, criteria for staffing of country offices and implementation of change management - 97/15)
	Official	I	(	Annual review of the financial situation 1996
	Official	I	(	Subcontracts awarded and major equipment ordered
4	CRP	I	½ day (	RESOURCES AND FUNDING STRATEGY
5				UNOPS: FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	Official	A	(	Budget estimates for the biennium 1998-1999
	Official	A	½ day (	Revised budget estimates for the biennium 1996-1997
	Official	I	(	Audit reports
				United Nations Office for Project Services: report of ACABQ on UNOPS

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ Information	Time Allotted	Item and subject
6				COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS
	Official	A	½ day (	Country cooperation frameworks and regional cooperation frameworks
		A	(	Revised global cooperation framework (97/5)
				UNFPA SEGMENT
7				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	Official	A	(	Biennial budget estimates
	Official	A	(	Annual financial review, 1996
	Official	I	1½ days (	Implementation and monitoring of technical support services arrangements
	Official	I	(	Evaluation of UNFPA training activities
8	Official	I		RESOURCE MOBILIZATION
9	Official	A	(	COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS
			(	Status of financial implementation of country programmes
10			½ day (	OTHER MATTERS
			(	Terms of reference of the WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health
			(	Population Charts

Abbreviations: A = action; CRP = conference room paper; I = information; and UNOPS = United Nations Office for Project Services.

Note: Review of field visits will be taken up in informal consultations during the session.

97/21. UNOPS: Risk management, reserves and surplus income

The Executive Board

(a) Takes note of the report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Office for Project Services (DP/1997/26);

(b) Decides to establish the level of the UNOPS operational reserve at 4 per cent of the combined expenditure on administrative and project budgets of the previous year, and to transfer unspent income to the reserve account until such level is reached;

(c) Approves the maintenance of the operational reserve at the level calculated annually according to the formula in the preceding paragraph;

(d) Requests that the Executive Director report on a biennial basis on the appropriateness of the level as set in the present decision;

(e) Notes that the Executive Director will continue to report annually on UNOPS income and expenditure levels and on drawdowns from the reserve.

18 September 1997

97/22. UNOPS: Revised budget estimates for the biennium 1996-1997 and budget estimates for the biennium 1998-1999

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the report of the Executive Director on revised budget estimates for the biennium 1996-1997 and budget estimates for the biennium 1998-1999 (DP/1997/29);

2. Approves the revised budget estimates for the 1996-1997 biennium in the amount of $70,579,000;

3. Approves the budget estimates for the 1998-1999 biennium in the amount of $84,700,000;

4. Approves the establishment of 37 additional posts, and the relocation of 1 post from New York to the Abidjan office.

18 September 1997

97/23. Follow-up to recommendations of the report of the Board of Auditors on the United Nations Office for Project Services (A/51/5/Add.10)

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the comments made by the United Nations Office for Project Services in document DP/1997/27 in response to the recommendations made in the report of the United Nations Board of Auditors for the biennium 1994-1995 (A/51/5/Add.10);

2. Requests the Executive Director to provide the Executive Board, at its annual session 1998, with an updated overview of the implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors and an updated timetable indicating the dates when follow-up action will have been completed in the areas that need to be addressed.

97/24. Budget estimates for the biennium 1998-1999

I. UNDP

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the report of the Administrator on the biennial support budget estimates for the biennium 1998-1999 as contained in document DP/1997/23, which incorporate elements necessary for the implementation of the UNDP 2001 change process approved by the Executive Board in decision 97/15; and also takes note of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (DP/1997/31);

2. Welcomes the new format for the presentation of the budget in line with decision 97/6, item 5, on the harmonization of budget presentations;

3. Approves the proposals by the Administrator as contained in paragraphs 57 to 61 of document DP/1997/23 including with regard to the collection of government contributions towards local office costs, taking into account the special circumstances of low-income countries, including small island developing States;

4. Approves the proposal by the Administrator as contained in paragraphs 103 to 114 of document DP/1997/23 on the staffing formula for adding supplementary staff at United Nations Volunteers headquarters;

5. Takes note of the report of the Administrator on development support services as contained in paragraphs 116 to 125 of document DP/1997/23;

6. Requests the Administrator, in accordance with the existing legal framework of the United Nations Development Programme, in particular Governing Council decision 71/14, and taking into account the recommendations of the

Advisory Committee, to ensure that all the heads of the regional bureaux are accorded the same rank and to amend the budget for the 1998-1999 biennium accordingly; to review the numbers of high-level positions at headquarters, as recommended by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions;

7. *Approves* gross appropriations in the amount of $590,593.500 for the purposes indicated below and resolves that income estimates of $72,127,000 shall be used to offset the gross appropriations, resulting in estimated net appropriations of $518,466.500;

1998-1999 Biennial support budgets

(Thousands of United States dollars)

Programme support:		
Country offices		273,864.2
Headquarters		64,810.2
	Subtotal	338,674.4
Management and administration		127,019.5
Support to operational activities of the United Nations:		
Country offices/OUNS		98,913.0
Inter-Agency Procurement Services Office		3,896.6
United Nations Volunteers		30,880.3
	Subtotal	133,689.9
Total gross appropriations		599,383.8
Adjustment		(8,790.3)
Adjusted total gross appropriations		590,593.5
less Estimated income		72,127.0
Estimated net appropriations		518,466.5

8. *Authorizes* the Administrator, to redeploy resources between appropriation lines up to a maximum of 5 per cent of the appropriation line to which the resources are redeployed;

9. *Requests* the Administrator to report to the Executive Board at its third regular session in 1998 on progress in implementing the biennial support budget for the biennium 1998-1999, taking into account relevant developments in the interim including, *inter alia*, United Nations reform, progress on the implementation of the UNDP 2001 change process, the review of levels of core contributions, the effect of currency exchange fluctuations, the nature and type of country presence, taking into account the operational complexity of the programme, and the Executive Board discussions on other resources and, at that time, to make any necessary recommendations.

II. FUNDS

10. Takes note of the report of the Administrator on the biennial support budget estimates for the biennium 1998-1999 for the United Nations Capital Development Fund, the United Nations Fund for Women, the Office to Combat Desertification and Drought and the United Nations Revolving Fund for Natural Resources Exploration, as contained in document DP/1997/23;

11. Welcomes the new format for the presentation of the budgets in line with decision 97/6, item 5, on the harmonization of budget presentations;

12. Approves gross appropriations for each of the Funds as follows:

1998-1999 Biennial support budgets
(Thousands of United States dollars)

	UNCDF	UNRFNRE	UNIFEM	UNSO
Total appropriations	12,864.0	1,532.8	10,695.2	5,852.4

13. Requests the Administrator to report to the Executive Board at its third regular session in 1998 on progress in implementing the biennial support budget for the biennium 1998-1999 for each of the funds, taking into account relevant developments in the interim and, at that time, to make any necessary recommendations.

19 September 1997

97/25. First country cooperation framework for Nigeria

The Executive Board

Approves the first country cooperation framework for Nigeria (DP/CCF/NIR/1) with the provision that the Administrator develop programmes in the areas identified in the framework using the following guidelines:

(a) The programmes must directly benefit the poorest sections of the population and deliver their benefits at the grass-roots level;

(b) The components of the programmes must be prepared with the full participation of the intended beneficiaries, in particular from the poorest sections of the community, and implemented through organizations of civil society, including national and international non-governmental organizations;

(c) The programme should be developed with clear monitoring components to enable the Administrator to report back to the Executive Board at its third regular session in 1998 on the content of the programme and to conduct regular evaluations of the impact of the programme at not less than annual intervals thereafter.

19 September 1997

97/26. Estimates for the support budget of the United Nations Population Fund for the biennium 1998-1999

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the 1998-1999 biennial support budget estimates of the United Nations Population Fund, as contained in document DP/FPA/1997/14, as well as of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions thereon (DP/FPA/1997/15);

2. Urges the Executive Director to make every effort to contain both the administrative and the programme support costs at headquarters and in the field, as recommended by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions;

3. Also urges the Executive Director to keep under review the prevailing climate of uncertainty regarding future income, particularly by delaying the filling of the proposed new positions of UNFPA Representatives at an estimated cost of $1,635,044, when implementing the budget for the 1998-1999 biennium;

4. Welcomes the new format for the presentation of the budget in line with decision 97/6, item 5, on the harmonization of budget presentations;

5. Approves gross appropriations in the amount of $143,255,500 for the purposes indicated below and resolves that the income estimates of $15,707,000 shall be used to offset the gross appropriations, resulting in estimated net appropriations of $127,548,500;

1998-1999 biennial support budgets*

(Thousands of United States dollars)

Programme support:	
Country offices	73,484.2
Headquarters	26,811.5
Subtotal	100,295.7
Management and administration of the organization	42,959.7
Total gross appropriations	143,255.5
Less: Estimated income to the budget	15,707.0
Estimated net appropriations	127,548.5

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* As reflected in the table on "UNFPA resource plan", dated 15 September 1997, and distributed on 17 September 1997 to the Executive Board.

6. Authorizes the Executive Director to redeploy resources between appropriation lines up to a maximum of 5 per cent of the appropriation to which the resources are redeployed;

7. Requests the Executive Director to report to the Executive Board at its third regular session 1998 on progress in implementing the support budget for the biennium 1998-1999, taking into account relevant developments until that time as well as foreseeable trends with regard, inter alia, to the income level for 1998 and the projections for 1999, the expected level of programme expenditure in 1998, as well as the United Nations reform process;

8. Also requests the Executive Director to present an oral report to the Executive Board at its second regular session 1998 on the criteria and mechanisms to be used for any readjustment to the biennial support budget for 1998-1999 in the event of any significant shortfall in income;

9. Recommends that the Executive Director undertake a study on multi-bilateral and trust fund arrangements and report to the Executive Board at the third regular session 1998, taking into account the ongoing study of the United Nations Development Programme on the same topic.

19 September 1997

97/27. Technical Support Services system of the United Nations Population Fund

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the report on the Technical Support Services system of the United Nations Population Fund as contained in document DP/FPA/1997/16;

2. Endorses the proposals for reconfiguring the Country Support Team adviser posts as contained in paragraphs 23-26 of document DP/FPA/1997/16;

3. Agrees, on a temporary basis for 1998, to the proposals for modifications of the Technical Support Services specialist posts in United Nations agencies and organizations as contained in paragraphs 27-31 of document DP/FPA/1997/16, understanding that any outstanding vacancies in the Technical Support Services specialist posts will not be filled in the interim;

4. Also agrees to review the "Report on an assessment of the TSS specialists post at headquarters and regional levels" in relation to document DP/FPA/1997/16 at the second regular session 1998, in particular in regard to the purpose, effectiveness and organization of the Technical Support Services specialist posts, with a view to providing direction for the Technical Support Services specialist arrangements for 1999;

5. Requests the Executive Director to reassess, in 1999, the Technical Support Services system, including an analysis of its financial aspects, that will be reviewed by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, and to report thereon to the Executive Board at the annual session 1999.

19 September 1997

97/28. Functioning of the Coordinating Committee on Health

The Executive Board

1. Takes note of the proposed draft terms of reference of the WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health as contained in document DP/FPA/1997/17;

2. Recommends that the WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health meet as soon as possible to discuss its functioning, including proposed amendments to its terms of reference, taking fully into account the core programme areas of the United Nations Population Fund, as well as substantive issues common to the mandates of the World Health Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Population Fund;

3. Calls upon the Secretariats of the World Health Organization, the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Population Fund to facilitate the convening of such a meeting;

4. Recommends that any agreed amendments made to the proposed draft terms of reference be submitted to the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and of the United Nations Population Fund for its consideration;

5. Requests the President of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and of the United Nations Population Fund to convey the present decision to the President of the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund and the Chairman of the Executive Board of the World Health Organization.

19 September 1997

97/29. Overview of decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its third regular session 1997

The Executive Board

Recalls that during the third regular session 1997 it:

ITEM 1: ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Approved the agenda and work plan for its third regular session 1997 (DP/1996/L.4/Rev.1);

Approved the report of the annual session 1997 (DP/1997/21);

Took note of the proposed annual work plan 1998 for UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board with the comments made thereon;

Approved the following schedule of future sessions of the Executive Board subject to the approval of the Committee on Conferences:

First regular session 1998:	19-23 January 1998
Second regular session 1998:	20-24 April 1998
Annual session 1998:	8-19 June 1998
Third regular session 1998:	14-18 September 1998

Agreed to the subjects to be discussed at the first regular session 1998 of the Board, as listed in the annex to the present decision;

Requested that a one-day joint session with UNICEF be held in January 1998 to enable an exchange of views on the impact of overall United Nations reform on the Funds and Programmes;

UNDP SEGMENT

ITEM 2: UNDP CHANGE MANAGEMENT

Took note of the report on the UNDP change management updated implementation plan (dec. 97/15) (DP/1997/CRP.22);

ITEM 3: FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Adopted decision 97/24 of 19 September 1997 on budget estimates for the biennium 1998-1999 (DP/1997/23);

Took note of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the UNDP budget estimates for the biennium 1998-1999 (DP/1997/31);

Took note of the report on the annual review of financial situation 1996 (DP/1997/24);

Took note of the detailed information relating to the 1996 annual review of the financial situation (DP/1997/24/Add.1);

Took note of the report on the status of management services agreement (DP/1997/24/Add.2) and recommended that the Administrator continue the management service agreement modality;

Took note of the report on subcontracts awarded and major equipment ordered (DP/1997/25*);

Took note of the reports on United Nations system technical cooperation expenditures, 1996 (DP/1997/30 and DP/1997/30/Add.1);

ITEM 4: UNDP: RESOURCES AND FUNDING STRATEGY

Decided to continue consideration of item 4 on UNDP resources and funding strategy at its first regular session 1998;

ITEM 5: UNOPS: FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Adopted decision 97/21 of 18 September 1997 on United Nations Office for Project Services risk management, reserves and surplus income (DP/1997/26);

Adopted decision 97/22 of 18 September 1997 on the United Nations Office for Project Services revised budget estimates for the biennium 1996-1997 and budget estimates for the biennium 1998-1999 (DP/1997/29);

Adopted decision 97/23 of 18 September 1997 on follow-up to recommendations of the report of the Board of Auditors on the United Nations Office for Project Services (A/51/5/Add.10) (DP/1997/27);

Took note of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the United Nations Office for Project Services (DP/1997/28);

ITEM 6: UNDP: COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS

Approved the following country cooperation frameworks:

I

First country cooperation framework for Angola (DP/CCF/ANG/1);
First country cooperation framework for Benin (DP/CCF/BEN/1);
First country cooperation framework for Botswana (DP/CCF/BOT/1);
First country cooperation framework for Burkina Faso (DP/CCF/BKF/1);
First country cooperation framework for Cameroon (DP/CCF/CMR/1);
First country cooperation framework for Chad (DP/CCF/CHD/1);
First country cooperation framework for Gabon (DP/CCF/GAB/1);
First country cooperation framework for Guinea-Bissau (DP/CCF/GBS/1);
First country cooperation framework for Malawi (DP/CCF/MLW/1);
First country cooperation framework for Mauritius (DP/CCF/MAR/1);
First country cooperation framework for Sao Tome and Principe (DP/CCF/STP/1);
First country cooperation framework for Senegal (DP/CCF/SEN/1);
First country cooperation framework for Seychelles (DP/CCF/SEY/1);
First country cooperation framework for South Africa (DP/CCF/SAF/1);

First country cooperation framework for Swaziland (DP/CCF/SWA/1);
First country cooperation framework for Zimbabwe (DP/CCF/ZIM/1);

II

First country cooperation framework for Cambodia (DP/CCF/CMB/1);
First country cooperation framework for Fiji (DP/CCF/FIJ/1);
First country cooperation framework for the Federated States of Micronesia (DP/CCF/FSM/1);
First country cooperation framework for Kiribati (DP/CCF/KIR/1);
First country cooperation framework for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DP/CCF/DRK/1);
First country cooperation framework for Malaysia (DP/CCF/MAL/1);
First country cooperation framework for Maldives (DP/CCF/MDV/1);
First country cooperation framework for the Marshall Islands (DP/CCF/MAS/1);
First country cooperation framework for Nepal (DP/CCF/NEP/1);
First country cooperation framework for Niue (DP/CCF/NIU/1);
First country cooperation framework for Pakistan (DP/CCF/PAK/1);
First country cooperation framework for Palau (DP/CCF/PAU/1);
First country cooperation framework for the Philippines (DP/CCF/PHI/1);
First country cooperation framework for Samoa (DP/CCF/SAM/1);
First country cooperation framework for the Solomon Islands (DP/CCF/SOI/1);
First country cooperation framework for Sri Lanka (DP/CCF/SRL/1);

First country cooperation framework for Thailand (DP/CCF/THA/1);
First country cooperation framework for Tonga (DP/CCF/TON/1);
First country cooperation framework for Tuvalu (DP/CCF/TUV/1);
First country cooperation framework for Vanuatu (DP/CCF/VAN/1);

III

First country cooperation framework for Armenia (DP/CCF/ARM/1*);
First country cooperation framework for Azerbaijan (DP/CCF/AZE/1);
First country cooperation framework for Bulgaria (DP/CCF/BUL/1);
First country cooperation framework for Georgia (DP/CCF/GEO/1);
First country cooperation framework for Malta (DP/CCF/MAT/1);
First country cooperation framework for the Russian Federation (DP/CCF/RUS/1);
First country cooperation framework for Saint Helena (DP/CCF/STH/1);
First country cooperation framework for Slovenia (DP/CCF/SVN/1);
First country cooperation framework for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (DP/CCF/MCD/1);
First country cooperation framework for Turkmenistan (DP/CCF/TUK/1);
First country cooperation framework for Ukraine (DP/CCF/UKR/1);

IV

First country cooperation framework for Anguilla (DP/CCF/ANL/1);
First country cooperation framework for Argentina (DP/CCF/ARG/1);
First country cooperation framework for Barbados (DP/CCF/BAR/1);
First country cooperation framework for the British Virgin Islands (DP/CCF/BVI/1);
First country cooperation framework for Brazil (DP/CCF/BRA/1);
First country cooperation framework for Chile (DP/CCF/CHI/1);
First country cooperation framework for Cuba (DP/CCF/CUB/1);
First country cooperation framework for Dominica (DP/CCF/DMI/1);
First country cooperation framework for the Dominican Republic (DP/CCF/DOM/1);
First country cooperation framework for El Salvador (DP/CCF/ELS/1);
First country cooperation framework for Grenada (DP/CCF/GRN/1);
First country cooperation framework for Guyana (DP/CCF/GUY/1);
First country cooperation framework for Honduras (DP/CCF/HON/1);
First country cooperation framework for Jamaica (DP/CCF/JAM/1);
First country cooperation framework for Mexico (DP/CCF/MEX/1);
First country cooperation framework for Peru (DP/CCF/PER/1);
First country cooperation framework for Saint Lucia (DP/CCF/STL/1);
First country cooperation framework for Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (DP/CCF/STV/1);
First country cooperation framework for Trinidad and Tobago (DP/CCF/TRI/1);
First country cooperation framework for Uruguay (DP/CCF/URU/1);
First country cooperation framework for Venezuela (DP/CCF/VEN/1);

V

First country cooperation framework for Djibouti (DP/CCF/DJI/1);
First country cooperation framework for Egypt (DP/CCF/EGY/1);

First country cooperation framework for Jordan (DP/CCF/JOR/1);
First country cooperation framework for Kuwait (DP/CCF/KUW/1);
First country cooperation framework for Saudi Arabia (DP/CCF/SAU/1);
First country cooperation framework for the Sudan (DP/CCF/SUD/1);
First country cooperation framework for the Syrian Arab Republic
(DP/CCF/SYR/1);
First country cooperation framework for the United Arab Emirates
(DP/CCF/UAE/1);
First country cooperation framework for Yemen (DP/CCF/YEM/1);

Agreed to postpone consideration of the first country cooperation framework for the Republic of Congo (DP/CCF/PRC/1), the first country cooperation framework for Montserrat (DP/CCF/MOT/1) and the first country cooperation framework for Yugoslavia (DP/1997/YUG/1);

Adopted decision 97/25 of 19 September 1997 on the first country cooperation framework for Nigeria (DP/CCF/NIR/1);

Took note of the extension of the following country programmes:

Extension of the fourth country programme for Albania
(DP/CP/ALB/4/EXTENSION I);
Extension of the third country programme for Antigua and Barbuda
(DP/CP/ANT/3/EXTENSION I);
Extension of the third country programme for the Cayman Islands
(DP/CP/CAY/3/EXTENSION I);
Extension of the fifth country programme for Costa Rica
(DP/CP/COS/5/EXTENSION I);
Extension of the fifth country programme for Paraguay
(DP/CP/PAR/5/EXTENSION I);
Extension of the third country programme for Saint Kitts and Nevis
(DP/CP/STK/3/EXTENSION I);
Extension of the third country programme for Turks and Caicos
(DP/CP/TCI/3/EXTENSION I);
Extension of the fifth country programme for the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya
(DP/CP/LIB/5/EXTENSION I);

Approved the regional cooperation framework for the Arab States (DP/RCF/RBAS/1);

Approved the revised global cooperation framework (97/5) (DP/GCF/1/Rev.1);

UNFPA SEGMENT

ITEM 7: UNFPA: FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Adopted decision 97/26 of 19 September 1997 on UNFPA estimates for the biennial support budget for 1998-1999 (DP/FPA/1997/14);

Took note of the report on evaluation of UNFPA staff training activities (DP/FPA/1997/11) and requested the Executive Director to make an oral presentation to the Executive Board on the implementation of the recommendations of the evaluation at the second regular session 1998;

Took note of the report on UNFPA annual financial review 1996 (DP/FPA/1997/13);

Adopted decision 97/27 of 19 September 1997 on the UNFPA technical support services system (DP/FPA/1997/16);

ITEM 8: UNFPA: RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

Decided to continue consideration of item 8 on UNFPA resource mobilization at its second regular session 1998;

ITEM 9: UNFPA: COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS

Decided to defer consideration of the UNFPA country programmes originally scheduled for the third regular session 1997 (Algeria, China, Egypt, Nicaragua, Paraguay and the Pacific subregion) to the first regular session 1998;

ITEM 10: OTHER MATTERS

Adopted decision 97/28 of 19 September 1997 on the terms of reference of the WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA Coordinating Committee on Health (DP/FPA/1997/17);

Confirmed the nominations of its representatives to the Coordinating Committee on Health;

Took note of the oral report on the activities undertaken in the Democratic Republic of the Congo;

Took note of the recommendations of UNFPA Advisory Committee on NGOs;

Took note of the oral report of the Administrator on the UNDP Reserve for Field Accommodation;

Took note of the oral presentation of the Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Policy and Programme Support, on the first session of the Conference of Parties of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and/or Drought in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa;

Decided to take up consideration of the mission reports of field visits to Cuba and Jamaica in 1997 (DP/1997/CRP.24) and to Kyrgyzstan and Latvia in 1997 (DP/1997/CRP.26) at an informal session of the Board to be held later in 1997;

19 September 1997

TENTATIVE WORK PLAN

EXECUTIVE BOARD OF UNDP/UNFPA

First regular session 1998

(19-23 January 1998 - 5 working days)

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ information	Time allotted	Item and subject
1				ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS
	Official (DP/1998/L.1)	A		Provisional agenda, annotations, list of documents
	Official	A	½ day	Report on the third regular session 1997
	Official	I		Decisions adopted by the Executive Board in 1997
				Annual work plan 1998 for UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board
				UNFPA/UNDP SEGMENT
2	Official	A/I		Updated overview of implementation of recommendations of the Board of Auditors (97/2 & 97/3)
			1 day	UNFPA SEGMENT
3	Official	A		UNFPA: COUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND RELATED MATTERS
				UNDP SEGMENT
				UNDP 2001:
4	Oral	I	½ day	Follow-up to 97/15 - Progress report
	Official	A		Narrowing the focus
5				COUNTRY COOPERATION FRAMEWORKS AND RELATED MATTERS
				Country cooperation frameworks
	Official	A	1½ days	Implementation strategy papers for RCFs (including timetable for mid-term review and proposed methodology) (97/9)
				Assistance to Myanmar (96/1)

Item No.	Nature of report	Action/ information	Time allotted	Item and subject
6				FINANCIAL, BUDGETARY AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS
	Official	A	1½ days	Review of modalities of non-core resources (96/44) including follow-up to 97/15, para. 23 (guidelines on national execution and role of UNDP in implementation)
	CRP	A/I		UNDP resources and funding strategy options: "Towards a sustainable funding strategy for UNDP"
	CRP	I		Review of round-table process
7				OTHER MATTERS

Note: A one-day joint session with UNICEF will be held in January 1998 to enable an exchange of views on the impact of overall United Nations reform on the Funds and Programmes.

Abbreviations: A = action; CRP = conference room paper; I = information; RCFs = regional cooperation frameworks.

Annex II

MEMBERSHIP OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD IN 1997

(Term expires on the last day in the year indicated)

African States: Burundi (1997); Democratic Republic of the Congo (1997); Ethiopia (1997); Gambia (1997); Guinea (1999); Libyan Arab Jamahiriya (1999); Madagascar (1998); Zambia (1997).

Asian and Pacific States: China (1997); India (1999); Indonesia (1997); Malaysia (1998); Pakistan (1999); Philippines (1997); Thailand (1999).

Latin American and Caribbean States: Antigua and Barbuda (1999); Argentina (1999); Belize (1998); Brazil (1999); Cuba (1997).

Eastern European States: Romania (1999); Russian Federation (1999); Slovakia (1997); Ukraine (1998).

Western European and other States: Australia (1999); Austria (1999); Finland (1998); France (1999); Germany (1997); Japan (1999); Netherlands (1998); Norway (1999); Sweden (1997); Switzerland (1998); United Kingdom (1999); United States (1999).